MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

#266 | July 2005 | $4

The Carbonas

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR crew's current Top 10 (or so) lists of stuff we've reviewed this month.

TIM BROOKS

CRISIS-LP / CAREER SUICIDE-12"
BASTARD SONS OF THE APOCALYPSE-EP
BORN/DEAD-LP / BRUTAL KNIGHTS-EP
GORILLA ANGREB-Aborted 2000-EP
KNUGEN FALLER–Inte Som Ni-EP
REATARDS-Plastic Surgery-EP
PEDESTRIANS-Why Kill What's Dead-EP
STRAIGHTJACKET-Enemy/30+ Years-CD
BLACK COUGAR SHOCK UNIT-CD
NORTH LINCOLN-Truth Is a Menace-CD

MITCH CARDWELL

NIX-Down the Tubes-EP
THE SHIT DOGS-World War III-LP
REATARDS-Plastic Surgery-EP
CATHOLIC BOYS-Actin' Stupid-EP
SCREAMIN' MEE-MEES-LP
CAREER SUICIDE-Invisible Eyes-12"
GORILLA ANGREB-Aborted 2000-EP & live
TOKYO ELECTRON-EP & live
REAL LOSERS-EP
BLACK TIME–Beat Of The Traps/Crawlin-EP

ROB COONS

HAYMAKER-Lost Tribe 30-11-04-EP
GORILLA ANGREB-Aborted 2000-EP
BORN/DEAD-Repetition-12"
CAREER SUICIDE-Invisible Eyes-12"
ASBESTOS-2xLP
SURF NAZIS MUST DIE-Anti-Everything-EP
UPSTAB-Yambag-EP
DEAN DIRG/HENRY FIATS OPEN SORE-split EP
BRUTAL KNIGHTS-Not Fun-EP
OBSERVERS-live

PAUL CURRAN

KNUGEN FALLER-Inte Som Ni-EP
DIGGER & THE PUSSYCATS-Card Shark Annie-EP
CHINESE TELEPHONES-EP
ARMY OF JESUS-Rats in the Walls-EP
KAUNIIT POLIITSIT-Vahingonlaukas-LP
SKATE KORPSE-EP / THE NICE BOYS-45
CAREER SUICIDE-Invisible Eyes-12"
DEAN DIRG/HENRY FIATS OPEN SORE-split EP
BORN/DEAD-Repetition-12"
GORILLA ANGREB-Aborted 2000-EP & live

JONATHAN FLOYD

CAREER SUICIDE-Invisible Eyes-12"
KNUGEN FALLER-Inte Som Ni-EP
FEVERS-Love Always Wins-LP
CHINESE TELEPHONES-EP
EPOXIES-Stop the Future-CD
DEAN DIRG/HENRY FIATS OPEN SORE-split EP
BRUTAL KNIGHTS-Not Fun-EP
RIVER CITY TANLINES-Gimme Whatever-EP
GORILLA ANGREB-Aborted 2000-EP & live
GIANT HAYSTACKS-live

JEFF HEERMANN

BLOODY TEARS-Downhanded-CD
GIMMES-Phonic Souls-CD
LOSERS-Gimme Action-EP
RIVER CITY TANLINES-Gimme Whatever-EP
REATARDS-Plastic Surgery-EP
CATHOLIC BOYS-Actin' Stupid-EP
INDIAN JEWELRY-In Love With Loving-EP
NEGATIVE APPROACH-Ready to Fight-2xLP
SCREAMIN' MEE-MEES-LP
SHIT DOGS-World War III-LP

KENNY KAOS

DIGGER & THE PUSSYCATS-Card Shark Annie-EP
STRAIGHTJACKET-Enemy/30+ Years-45
TRAGICZ-Music for Haters, Vol. 7-EP
SACK-O-WOES-Baby I'm Born Old-EP
THE BLOWCHUNKS-Hey Stupid-EP
REATARDS-Plastic Surgery-EP
KNUGEN FALLER-Inte Som Ni-EP
THE NICE BOYS-You Won't See Me Anymore-45
KUNG FU MONKEYS-Coast to Coast-EP
REVOLVERS–It's Christmas Time Again-EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

BLACK TIME-45 / CAREER SUICIDE-12"
REATARDS-EP / CATHOLIC BOYS-EP
RIVER CITY TANLINES-Gimme Whatever-EP
NIX-EP / TOKYO ELECTRON-EP
DEAN DIRG/HENRY FIATS OPEN SORE–split EP
TRAGICZ-EP / KNUGEN FALLER-EP
DIGGER & THE PUSSYCATS-Card Shark Annie-EP
STRAIGHTJACKET-Enemy/30+ Years-45
GANG OF FOUR-live
Old San Francisco-film

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

Please send us records (2 copies of vinyl, if possible–one for MRR and one for reviewer), or CD-only releases. See reviews section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

RAY LUJAN

- VMW-CD / MESSENGERS-CD
- RIVER CITY TANLINES-Gimme Whatever-EP
- SAME DAY SERVICE-CD
- BRUTAL KNIGHTS-Not Fun-EP
- CAPTAIN SENSIBLE AND KING-My Baby-10"
- EPOXIES-Stop the Future-CD
- THE OPPRESSED-both CDs
- JAPANTHER-Wolfenswan-CD
- CRISIS-The Guilty Have a Past-LP
- SADO-NATION live / GORILLA ANGREB live

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

BRINGING THE SCENE TO JOHNSON CITY, TENNESSEE

GOLNAR NIKPOUR

- SKATE KORPSE-Down-EP
- KNUGEN FALLER-Inte Som Ni-EP
- CAREER SUICIDE-Invisible Eyes-12"
- BASTARD SONS OF THE APOCALYPSE-EP
- GORILLA ANGREB-Aborted 2000-EP
- PEDESTRIANS-Why Kill What's Dead-EP
- CLUSTERFUCK-Midlife Crisis-EP
- ARMY OF JESUS-Rats in the Walls-EP
- NIX-Down the Tubes-EP
- CATHOLIC BOYS-Actin' Stupid-EP

DONNA POOLE

- GORILLA ANGREB-Aborted 2000-EP
- THE BLOWCHUNKS-Hey Stupid-EP
- VITTU EL KIITOS-Se On Fuckin' Finland-EP
- KNUGEN FALLER-Inte Som Ni-EP
- PEDESTRIANS-Why Kill What's Dead-EP
- UPSTAB-Yambag-EP
- NIX-Down the Tubes-EP
- TRAGICZ-Music for Haters, Vol. 7-EP
- CAREER SUICIDE-Invisible Eyes-12"
- GORILLA ANGREG/OBSERVERS/THIS IS MY FIST-live

WILL WEBER KNEITEL

- SURF NAZIS MUST DIE-Anti-Everything-EP
- REATARDS-Plastic Surgery-EP
- BRUTAL KNIGHTS-Not Fun-EP
- CAREER SUICIDE-Invisible Eyes-12"
- CATHOLIC BOYS-Actin' Stupid-EP
- THE NICE BOYS-45
- KNUGEN FALLER-Inte Som Ni-EP
- SKATE KORPSE-Down-EP
- SUBURBAN DEATH MACHINE-EP
- GORILLA ANGREB/ OBSERVERS -live

BRUCE ROEHRS

- THE ESCAPED-CD / THE TEMPLARS-EP
- HAYMAKER-EP / THE CONTRARY-LP
- DISSECT/LOS REZIOS-split EP
- UPSTAB-EP / VITTU EL KIITOS-EP
- BRUTAL KNIGHTS-EP / CAREER SUICIDE-12"
- KAUNIIT POLIITSIT-Vahingonlaukas-LP
- KOBRAXI/SIKA-split EP
- LOOSE SKREWS-CD / THE KNOX-LP
- THE OPPRESSED-Skinhead Times 1982-1998-2xCD
- BONECRUSHER/SHOCK TROOPS-live

RYAN WELLS

GAMBLIN' & BOOZIN' IN VEGAS...OR SOMETHING

ZINE TOP TEN

- The Dragomen #1
- Six Ripped Up Pictures from 1990 #3
- Strap Yourself In #6 & #7
- Assassin and the Whiner #15
- Slingshot #86
- A Child's Guide to Nihilism #1
- The Neus Subjecx #64
- Return of the Monkeys in the Sun #21
- Trust #110
- Go Metric! #19

MRR SHITWORKERS

Aragorn
Peter Avery
Madeleine Baran
Jerry Booth
Tim Brooks
Dean Carrico
Rob Coons
Jip Daems
Mikel Delgado
Ben Ditch
Robert Eggplant
Joe Filipone
Travis Fristoe
Jane Ghotlos
Harald Hartmann
Cassie Harwood
Seth Hollander
Vince Horner
Ed Hunter
Dan Joseph
Kenny Kaos
Will Weber Kneitel
Paul Lesneski
Ray Lujan
Hal MacLean
Allan McNaughton
Tobia J. Minckler
Paco Mus
Spencer Rangitsch
Casey Ress
Andy Shoup
Mary Southworth
Brian Stern
Morgan Stickrod
Christy Thornton
Maxwell Tremblay
Ryan Wells
Erin Yanke
Carl Auge
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Amy Browne
Ariel Celeste
Craigums
Andy Darling
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#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#151/Dec '95. Lowdowns, My White Bread Mom, Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/Humanity, Stains, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#154/Mar '96. Motards, Subincision, Stisism, Donnas, Stallions, Count Backwards.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q. Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divísia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, the Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemtion 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#172/Sept '97. Withdrawals, Judgement, No Motiv, Oppressed Logic, Truents, Left For Dead, Yellowskin, Weird Lovemakers, Smash Your Face, Flatus, Straight Faced, Klaxon, X-It.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity, Education theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, Third Party, No Class, Skabs.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#219/Aug '01. "Fix It!" cycling article, Crucial Unit, Lost Sounds, Lombardies, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 1, Casualties, Resinators, *P.U.N.K.*, Slaughter & the Dogs, Anti-Flag, Dontcares, S'Bitch.

#220/Sep '01. Latin American Issue. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum , Kim Bae Photo Essay.

#221/Oct '01. Tales from the G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Anti-war guest columns. Anti-war scene reports. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#237/Feb '03. Top Ten Records of 2002, "Music as a Weapon: Artists in Wartime," Dirt Bike Annie, Let It Burn, Stockyard Stoics, King Khan & Shrines, 625 Records, Feast Or Famine, Rudimentary Peni, Coachwhips, Self Defense.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola and San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine, Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#252/May '04. Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, Portland, Boston, Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, "Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scene report

263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

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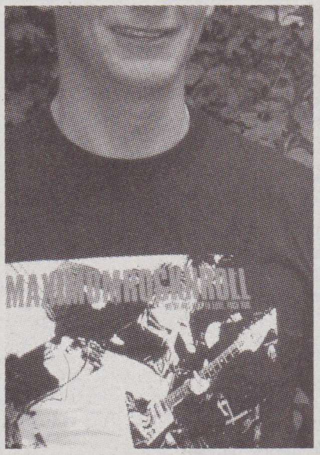

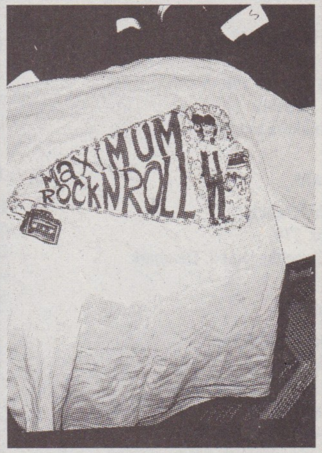

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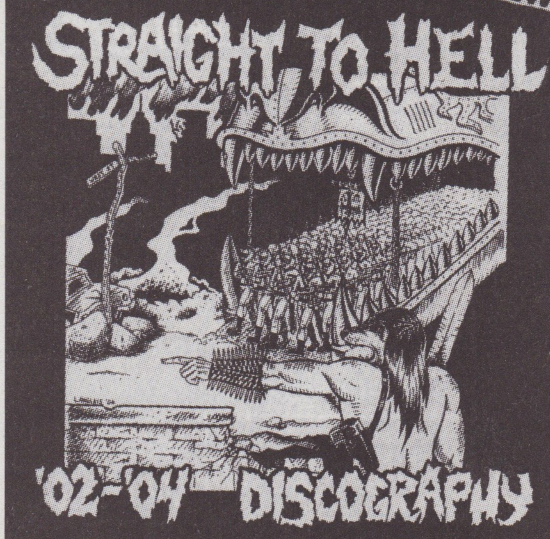

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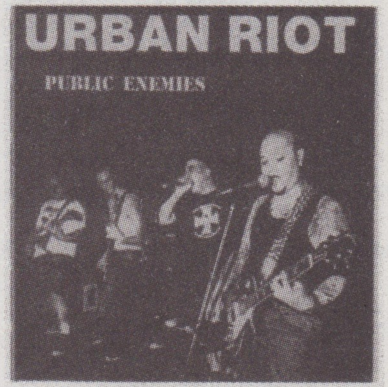

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MRR—

What the fuck is up with all these shitty posi/crew HC bands like Cold World, Mental, and Terror? Are they not aware that all those names were already taken, some as far back as 1982? There was a Swedish punk band called Terror who put out a 7" in '82, and a Japanese hardcore band called Mental from Shizuoka city (home of such greats as The Rustler, Deadless Muss, and Innocents) that had an 8" flexi out in '89. OK, I admit some of this stuff is pretty obscure, but the fucking worst is this new band called Cold World. There was a fucking awesome Austrian band called Cold World that was around in the late 80s/early 90s who sounded like Heresy and had records on Sound Pollution. Now, I'll be honest, I've never even heard this new Cold World, but fuck, if they don't sound like Heresy or Septic Death, then they better just quit right now. I know that hardcore punk is not full of the most original names, but to me, there's a big difference between naming your band after a song/record out of admiration and blatantly stealing a name from a band that was around way before your time. Seriously, just use some creativity! I always thought it would be fun to start a band called Miner Threat. We would play DC style hardcore and sing about canaries and mining. OK, sorry for the huge rant, but this has been on my mind for some time. Peace!

—Zach Howard

Zach—

I'm glad that you admit that the bands you mention are more than a little obscure—I have literally never heard of any of them! It's true that the punk scene is rife with recycled names and images, but this is not a new phenomenon (just ask either Youth Brigade). I too prefer bands that have the spark of originality, but I try to cut bands slack—it would be one thing to name your band Negative Approach or Antisect and not realize that there is another band by that name, but there have been so many thousands of punk bands that there certainly isn't a single person who knows 'em all. For more on the matter, you should flip to the columns section to read an interview that our own Arwen Curry did with the two current coordinators who aren't me, Paul and Martin, about punk band names. They touch on the topic of recycled band names, and come up with some pretty funny stuff.

—Golnar

Maxi Rocker!—

Yo Yo it's Karl Bakla, telling you what's up in Las Vegas! First of all I'd like to tell you I'm writing this letter at work and that's just like stealing, because I'm using company time to do my evil doings. I guess I don't really know if I have gotten away with this hideous crime yet because it usually takes a day or two for people to get called down to the office and told that they are fired. Fuck it, it's not like I enjoy going to work anyway. Some people tell me I should get a better job. Well, let me tell you I have what some would call a "better job," and take it from me I don't like any job. Let me take that back. There are three kinds of jobs I like: no, blow, & hand.

All right I told you a while ago that I found a dead body after a crappy Skinny Puppy gig, so here's the story in all of its glory. The night started like any night that I spend enjoying live music. I showed up for the show early, but entered the club late due to the fact that I was sitting in my car polishing off a twelve-pack of Coors Light & rocking out to Sore Throat. Hmmm Coors Light is as delicious as I remembered it the night before, Sore Throat sounded much better when I first discovered them fifteen years or so ago, but fuck it, they still sound better than Operation: Cliff Clavin. When I got into the House Of Blues I did what I usually do when I go there—I headed straight for the bar & ordered "Two Coors Lights, please!" As I turned away from the bar I was greeted by DJ Big Jiz, he pointed towards the stage & asked me "who the fuck is this dickhead?" On stage was a DJ dressed up like Santa Claus. The DJ's name was Felix Von Skratch & he is no Felix Von Havoc. Sometime around this point I started to get really fucking drunk, & not just normal drunk, the kind of drunk where you wake up the next morning & have Fight, Fight, Fight & Kill, Kill, Kill written on your arm, but that's another story to be told at another time. I know Skinny Puppy probably played for a long time, because Bethany & I drank $140 worth of beer & even at $5 a pop that's still a lot, but I only really remember them playing one song called "Pro-Test." The show actually ended really early, so Bethany suggested we all meet up at the Palms to eat. Me being a fan of food & mischief I was down to continue the adventure. So we pulled out of the Mandalay Bay & I suggest to Bethany that we should drive the back way because there is less chance of the bass player of Ringwurm (Bay Area) pulling us over & arresting her punk ass for driving drunk. I also told her that I was planning on relaxing the next day so if she got arrested tonight it would probably be at least two days before I'd be able to bail her out of jail. We drove down the back roads & saw a gas station. We both agreed on pulling in & getting some refreshments, since this would be a long fifteen or so minute car ride. In the store I'm in shock they have no Coors Light. What the fuck! Did I drink the damn city dry? So I had to resort to the sort of good old stand by known as Miller Light. I bought two 32oz bottles & a bag of Chex spicy party mix, & headed back on our journey to the Palms. A few minutes after we left the store, I yell, "Holy shit! I just saw a dead body." Bethany says, "Where?" I tell her, "Back there." When we look back, we see a bicycle on the ground & a dead body laying a yard or two away from it. Bethany tells me she would like to go back & look at it, I tell her "Fuck no!" & that we will call 911 but we will not go look at the body because we will for sure be arrested. While I'm trying to be a "man" & put my foot down, Bethany flips a U-turn & drives towards the dead body. When we get to the dead body Bethany tells me she wants to look at it, I tell her that she isn't going to, & that we will call an ambulance & leave before Victor Willis of the Village People shows up & ruins our insurance rate.

As Bethany is looking out her car window amazed at the dead body, I call 911 and ask for an ambulance. While I'm talking to the operator, Bethany bolts from the car and goes up to the dead body. After a second or two of me yelling out the window for Bethany to, "Get the fuck back in the car," she decides to nudge the dead body with her foot, or maybe she kicked it. I think she kicked it, but I'd hate to think she is that much of a horrible human being. After Bethany nudges the dead body, it comes alive & makes a groaning noise. Bethany asks the guy, "What the fuck happened?" The dead guy tells us that he was riding his bike drunk & fell off of his bike. Bethany then asks the guy if he's thirsty & he says, "Yes." I'm thinking, "what the fuck" as Bethany walks over to my side of the car & grabs my beer & hands it to this wannabe Critical Mass member. Fuck I was pissed, but I still hand my yummy spicy Chex Mix & it tasted fucking good. Then the unthinkable happened. Bethany asked Jeff Ott if he was hungry & of course this ungrateful fuck said, "Yes" & Bethany walked back to my side of the car & took my food from me & gave it to this motherfucker. Bethany then got back in the car, I asked her why the fuck she gave that dick my beer & food, she said we may be in the same position someday. I explained to her that I don't give a fuck if this was El Duce of the Mentors, that she should not jack my crap & give it to some one else. I also went on to tell her that she is gonna be the death of this guy because to start with he couldn't ride his bike drunk, & now he has a beer in one hand & my spicy Chex mix in the other. The dead guy then got on his bike & did the bike riding equivalent of staggering, the sight of which made Bethany & I brake out into uncontrollable laughter. We then decided to head to the Palms because we wasted so much time already that everyone waiting for us would probably be freaking out thinking the guy from Half Life (Pittsburgh) arrested us. When we got to the Palms DJ Big Jiz told us he thought we got pulled over, I told him we found a dead body & that I'd tell him about it over dinner. If you're curious for dinner I had fried Spam, cheesecake, & a Coors Light. I know it's not very punk to go see Skinny Puppy, but I like to fuck & people in the industrial scene seem to be up to my speed when it comes to fucking.

In Las Vegas news my buddies from Sacramento Diciembre Gris will be playing in Las Vegas in June. Hell fuck yeah! Shapes Of Race Cars played an empty Double Down the other night but still kicked ass. Last but not least, when are we gonna have a *Killed By Death: Las Vegas* compilation? I could just see it— Fried Green, Keep On Trucking, Puckered Starfish, Whole, Zub Zub, Lady, Scratch My Ass Heart Attack, 51/50, Area 51, Lickity Split, & the Heroines. Until that happens if you want to hear some Las Vegas shit let me know, I'll dub it for you. If you are in an old Las Vegas band & have some demo tapes or 7"s laying around & you want to get rid of them let me know. Also my buddies in Kontrol & fellow Las Vegas valley locals will be playing in the Bay Area soon so go check them out. In Karl Bakla plugs, my band the Hatefucks after four years has finally got a solid line up & a show set up on May 21st. Come check it out posers!

—Karl Bakla
Lasvegashardcore@aol.com

PS: Bethany attended one of those Democracy For America meet ups at Hamburger Mary's the other night & said it was great. I encourage others to go. I would have gone but I had more important things to do like watch the great flick *Super Babies* with my daughter. It's funny her mom (Bethany) has such shitty taste in movies (she likes crappy independent films that you're supposed to like) but you can always count on my four-year old to pick a flick that appeals to me.

Also Bethany wants to start a political newsletter/email list if you're interested email her blakmetalbethany@aol.com. Here, you can also confirm that my stories are true, since I've already been accused of being a liar by some of you fuck heads that read this rag.

MRR—

Thanks for the great review of the Migra Violenta CD in the June issue. They are available for $10 ppd US or $14 world through I Deal Records. Get in touch for cheap wholesale rates! Thanks and take care,

—Matt Dillon
180 Rudgate Road
Colchester VT
05446

MRR—

A couple of issues back, I read a column by Felix Havoc about punk bands and their T-shirts. Felix writes about how almost all bands have T-shirts and how having T-shirts at your merch table at shows is so important today. I couldn't agree more; he's 100% right about this point. Kids buy T-shirts more then anything else. I myself have tons of band T-shirts and I probably wear one everyday. He also writes about the fact that many bands use T-shirts made in sweatshops. This is something I have been battling with for years. I can't bring myself to buy sweatshop clothes so why would I buy sweatshop T-shirts to sell with my band's name printed on them? For years I said no way to sweatshop clothes—it was union made/US made only. The only problem was we could never buy union made shirts because of their high cost. We could get them now and then, but not in large numbers.

In the past, bands I have played with have wanted T-shirts but always hit a dead-end because we did not sell large enough numbers of them, and it is hard for an up and coming band to sell a shirt for 10-12 bucks. Dropping 10-12 bucks on a shirt is tough, and kids would think twice when it's a band they have only heard once. Felix brings up a number of good points, but he doesn't mention the trouble smaller bands run into with getting and selling merch.

It takes time for a smaller band to make the money that they put into their band back, which makes times hard. Smaller bands often end up spending the cash made from merch on gas and food, since the show they just played was not flyered well or deemed important enough. There was a guest column written by Josh Stein in response to Felix, which left nothing answered for us. Josh basically said "buy union, you really have no reason to do anything else." Well that's a lot easier said than done, since prices for US/union made Ts are sometimes five-six bucks per shirt *before* printing. Yes, when purchased in large amounts the prices go down but not enough. You will still pay four bucks for the shirt alone then at least a buck more to print them.

I play in a band that has been around for a while now, and we have done a lot of touring in the past couple years. We sell a decent amount of merch. The shows we play have been getting pretty good and touring is getting a lot easier. But we still have the same problems with T-shirts. What do we do when getting ready to leave for a two-month tour then shortly after, head out for another month? The van needs fixing and patches/records/ stickers/buttons all need to be done. Then on top of all that, we need shirts. What I did before tour last summer was ask around for non-sweatshop shirts. *Not* union made shirts just non-sweatshop. I was told about a place called Jerzees. I was told they are not US or union made but sweatshop free. These were the shirts we got. After that we really did not find any more about this company, just negative news about why we shouldn't buy non-union/US shirts. For the next tour, we bought 100 union made shirts. The profit margin was not very high on the union made shirts since we sold them for eight bucks. So we started looking again.

For this summer, I decided once again to look for non-sweatshop shirts, though not union made/US shirts. I asked people involved with unions and who were involved in anti-sweatshop activism, but nobody would give me anything to work with. I found it hard to believe that every place that is non-union and not in the US is a sweatshop. We hit a point where we needed a lot of shirts, and we needed them at a good price. It's not just that we needed shirts, we wanted them, and with gas prices today we needed a profit margin that would work for us. We decided eventually to go with a company that the kid who does our shirts thinks is an OK, non-sweatshop company. We don't have US or union made shirts but we've given this issue a lot of thought. We are not ignoring the problem, we are dealing with it. We hope to move forward as a band and get union made shirts in the future with companies we trust. It's not that we don't trust this company but the info on them is limited. Prices are going up even with these T-shirts. We will have to sell them for nine bucks and hope that kids will understand. The overhead is not that high, but still enough that we have put ourselves in a little debt.

The fact is, some companies are worse then others. A company like American Apparel is the best, since you don't have to worry about anything except the price. With T-shirts as with anything, a band should think about what it is doing before they do it, and make decisions that they can be happy with. Touring is fun and as touring bands we need to think about the damage we do driving huge vans and buying sweatshop shirts while leaving our trash all over the place. We can't simply point fingers at who is using the right T-shirts and who is not. Some us are working towards a better way, and the bottom line is we are doing our best. Some people don't give a fuck about sweatshops, driving, or the destruction we cause, and yes, some of those people are punks. So I guess my solution for the T-shirt problem is this: if you are in a band that sells 100s of shirts, then go union — they are the best, and you can't go wrong. Raise your T-shirt prices to 10-12 bucks. You really don't have to worry, kids will still buy Bane T-shirts if they cost a little more. If you happen to be in a smaller band just starting out or a band that can't afford the overhead of union made T-shirts, then look for other solutions. Go with a T-shirt brand you think may be OK. You can also search thrift stores and places like that if only need 10-30 shirts. Think about the money you have to spend and spend it responsibly. Nobody is perfect, but with all the tools for research in 2005 we can all at least do our homework on topics like these.

—Ryan Cappelletti
537 Caroline St.
Rochester NY
14620
punksbeforeprofits@hotmail.com

To the beautiful readers of MRR—

Isn't the scene ironic? I read a letter in an issue a couple months back with some "rules of punk," but then punks preach unity...? Isn't the idea of punk that we are generally a group of outcasts and social misfits due to such things as radical political views, taste in music and clothes, etc. But if a punk doesn't dance at a show or isn't as active in the scene as others, he isn't punk enough? Yeah, it's OK to be angry—that's what makes us look through all the bullshit of the world to try to find some truth. But we're supposed to be fighting them! Them, the society that puts us down. Them, the government who gives us rules to live by. Them, the cops who blindly enforce rules, using their career as the excuse for a power trip earned not with intelligence but with a badge and a gun. Punk is supposed to be about individuality so we should have no problem if someone does things a bit differently than we do. I'm not trying to get anybody pissed, though I probably will. We're already small in number, so we need to look beyond small differences and be united, not follow trends, try to be more punk than the next guy, or keep up this bullshit, elitist attitude.

Stay punk everyone,
—Frank

MRR—

I'm contacting you because reviewed the Dirt Shit - *Rattenloch* EP in MRR #265. First of all thanx a lot for the good review. It was great pleasure for me to read it. The only additional comment I would like to give is the address. There is an address stated within the record. At least if you got all additional papers coming with the record. The address is: Jens Ferbitz, Ueckermuender Str. 11, 10439 Berlin, Germany, A-Karte-records@gmx.de. You can also contact frontcore@gmx.de.

It's no problem to give the address, as this re-release is absolutely legal and done together with the drummer of DIRT SHIT Ronnie Urini, who gratefully allowed and helped me to use the original master-tape. Additionally, I would like to correct the review of V/A - *Fun's Not Dead - Music Against The Human Race 2* LP & EP from MRR #263. The contact address given for this release is not correct. And as the record is from Arschkarte and Frontcore Records as well. The correct email address is:
frontcore@gmx.de. Or as above:
A-Karte-records@gmx.de. Thanks,
—JenZ

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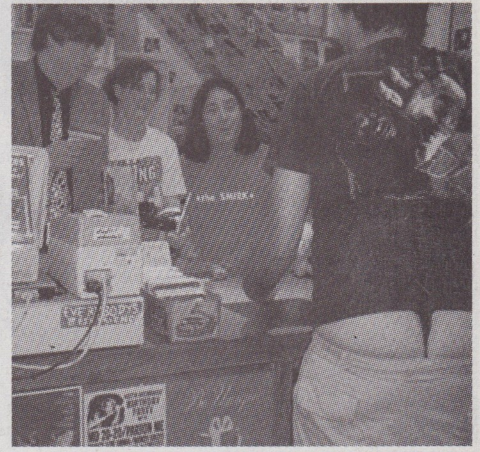

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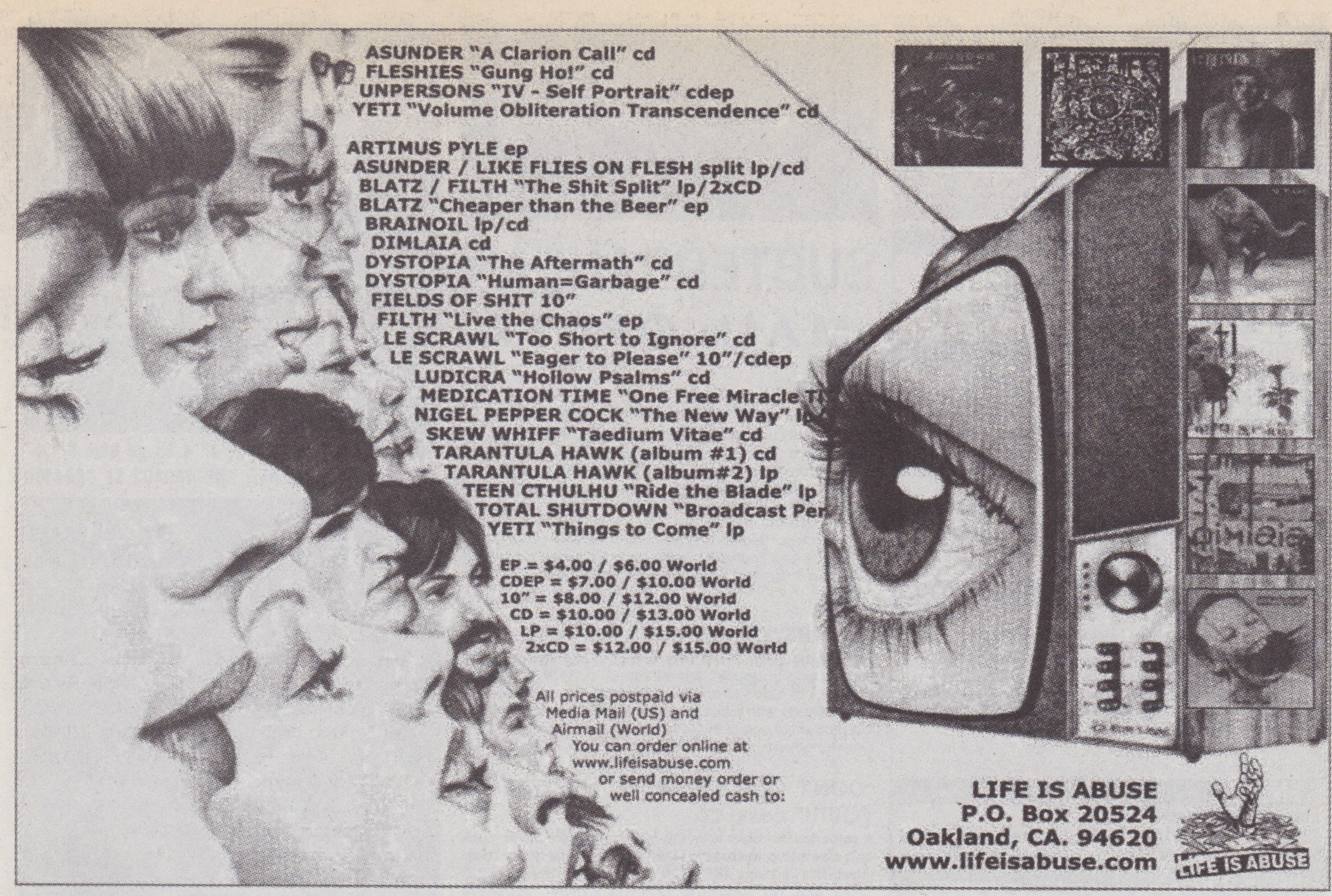

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WITH ARWEN CURRY

Recently I did a radio piece for KALX, the UC Berkeley radio station, about the importance of choosing the right band name. I used a short clip from the following interview with Paul and Martin. When I was complaining to a friend about wasting a fun interview, a friend suggested that I print the whole transcript here. Paul has threatened to put the radio piece up on the MRR website, so check it out if you like.

Caveat Number One: you may notice something slightly bizarre about the whole concept of this interview, namely that everyone involved has lived at the house, run the magazine, etc. It's not exactly investigative journalism, is what I'm saying — more like talking to yourself in public. Caveat Number Two: ack, I was on deadline, and Golnar was out of town; that's why she's not in here. Next month: good advice!

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Arwen: What's an example of a band name that's too long?

Martin: I think a name like Planes Mistaken for Stars is a little too long of fucking band name.

Paul: The Plot to Blow Up the Eiffel Tower.

Martin: Yeah, thank you. Way too long.

Please Inform the Captain This is a Hijack. Great band, great people, the name's really long. What was the other one? This Bike is a Pipe Bomb. That's another one that's pretty damn long.

Arwen: Why is it important to have a good band name?

Martin: Well, I think having the right name for your band is really important. It says a lot about a band, it gives a band character. It could be a really short and sharp name, and it's to the point. If you don't have a name that really works with the band, if you call yourselves the Potato Chips...

Paul: Or the Onion Flavored Rings....

Martin: ...And the Potato Chips happen to be like a band that has a very serious message, is a very political band, a lot of people are just going to kind of write it off, cause you're called the fucking Potato Chips. I don't know. It doesn't say what the band is about, and I think it should kind of reflect that. And a lot of times, a band can kill themselves before they've even gotten their music out there, just based on their name. Especially in this scene, in punk, a good name is important. I mean, if you're a pop punk band, you could probably be really popular if your name was the Potato Chips. But in more aggressive, harder-edged punk, the Potato Chips wouldn't go really far. They wouldn't leave the bag.

Arwen: Isn't it true that names signify a lot? If you saw a flyer, which is one of the main ways that we announce shows going on, and you weren't even familiar with any of the bands, you could probably tell what style they were from the names.

Martin: The names, the logos, the font, the artwork that is used, that all kind of plays into the presentation, the overall feel of what a band is like. So, you know, the Potato Chips would have a tough time.

But there's great band names in the past. All the one-name bands are almost all used up: the Germs, the Bags, the Offs, the Zeros. The Subhumans, the Misfits — there's so many one-name bands that were great names, and they all work really well. To find a band name now that is like that, that is to-the-point, is really tough — and it becomes trickier and trickier, especially with punk music that is now thirty years old or whatever. To find a really good, solid punk band name is hard.

Arwen: What is an example of a great band with a terrible name?

Paul: the Mr. T Experience. They were a great, great band, but they had to overcome that name. I think they had to be exceptionally good to live that down.

Arwen: What about a terrible band with a good name?

Paul: Oh, there's probably been a lot.

Martin: Terrible band with a great name…see, terrible bands I don't even pay attention to, so it's hard to remember.

Arwen: Give me a sense of how many records are on the shelves here.

Martin: I think there's close to 50,000 records on this shelf.

Arwen: Most of them are seven-inch singles.

Paul: More than fifty percent are, but there's a great deal of LPs as well. And there's ten-inches and eight-inches and nine-inches, and six-inches and five-inches.

Arwen: Tell me what you mean by "initial bands."

Paul: Well it seemed that in early hardcore there were several key great bands that were three-initial bands, like MDC, which stood for Millions of Dead Cops, but then it stood for Multi-Death Corporation, and they kept changing what it stood for. And then there was DRI, which is Dirty Rotten Imbeciles...

Martin: COC, Corrosion of Conformity…

Paul: It seemed like it influenced a lot of other bands and it became a huge trend.

Martin: And there's tons of them. AOF, Articles of Faith...

Paul: AOD, FOD...

Martin: AOD, Adrenalin Overdose, or whatever, and then you got FOD, Flag of Democracy…

Paul: And then you got BGK, which is something in Dutch.

Martin: And then there's CCM, Cheetah Chrome Motherfuckers, from Italy, JFA, Jodie Fosters Army. There's too many; there's a lot.

Youth. Youth bands. You got Youth of Today, Youth Youth Youth, Youth Brigade, Distorted Youth, Wasted Youth.

Paul: Impatient Youth.

Arwen: Reagan Youth.

Martin: Reagan Youth, Great band. Youth is very common, and then there's Dis, what we call Dis bands. The Dis originated from the UK, a band called Discharge, that played a certain style of punk that became very influential for many bands, and all bands since the 90s on that were influenced by them incorporated the Dis for their name. You have Disfear, Dis…

Paul: You should come over to the Dis section.

Martin: yeah, there's a Dis section. Let's go.

Disaster, Distaste, Dissucks — I know somebody in that band — Disagree, Disaffect...

Paul: Disarm.

Martin: Disarray. There's a band called the Disappointments.

Paul: Definitely not a Dis band.

Arwen: Explain what you mean when you say they're not a Dis band.

Martin: They don't play the Dis style. But Dischange does. Disclose, of course. Discard.

Paul: Discider, Disclaim.

Martin: Why is Besthöven in there? It's a misfile.

Paul: They used the Discharge font, that's why they got filed in there.

Arwen: So what happens when you're in a band and you come up with a name, and then you realize that another band already had the name before you?

Martin: It sucks. It happens and it sucks. I think the most popular is the Subhumans; there was the Canadian Subhumans and the UK Subhumans. Both political bands, but very different in style. I remember back when I was younger people would be like, "You like the Subhumans?" And you would say, "Which Subhumans?" And they would be like, "Well, the Canadian ones suck." And then you know its based on people's opinions, so they'd be like, "Of course, the UK Subhumans," and people would have to specify. Was it the Canadian Subhumans you're talking about? Same thing with Youth Brigade — Youth Brigade DC or Youth Brigade LA? And what happens to those bands is, one ends up becoming more popular than the other, and then there's always this kind of mass confusion and the punk scene's a wreck over it.

Paul: Or sometimes if you find out that your band names been used by a band that nobody's ever heard of, it's kind of no big deal, and you can go ahead and steal the band's name and hope that you become more renowned than they were.

Martin: Totally.

Paul: Or you can even blatantly steal an old band's name that nobody's heard of, you know — that's always a good tactic.

Martin: Who was that band on GSL, oh, the Lost Kids, there's this band that's really popular called the Lost Kids right now, but I was really confused because I know the old Danish Lost Kids, and I love that band. So I'm upset that they took that name because they're not worthy.

We're in the collection, this is the seven-inch collection. Should we start with A's? You'll hear a lot of tearing sounds — that's because every record is wrapped in green tape. [*They stick together.—Ed.]*

We do that so it's kind of a marking factor that the record was from this collection. If it's ever missing or found somewhere, people know they can purchase it and return it to us, because this is an archive.

Paul: It's also because there is a lot of weird packaging on records, and this way we get to just have them all taped together, and they're all kind of a uniform size and shape, no matter what kind of fold-out poster sleeve or half-assed record cover a band wanted to make for their record.

Martin: OK, here's an initial band that got too many initials going. AMQA – what the hell does it stand for? I don't even know. Will you remember it? Probably not. But that's too many fucking initials.

Arwen: What's the name of that single?

Martin: The single is called "Cats are Neat" and it's a kid stabbing…he has like lanced a kitty cat that's saying "Meow, meow, meow, meow," and it says, "Cats are Neat." And the kids got braces or something and glasses and a mohawk. It's wrong.

Oh wait! Apple Maggot Quarantine Area. You see, that's just really bad. Apple Maggot Quarantine Area. So maybe they were better off abbreviating, because nobody would ever remember that band name.

Let's see — A.P.P.L.E. A.P.P.L.E. is a band from New York, political punk band. Apple — not very political sounding, but the way they use their logo and everything, it's very clear. Circle A, circle E. Circle A: Anarchy, circle E: equality, so you start kind of getting a feel of what this band is about. But if they would have just wrote "Apple," no circle anything, you'd never know. No one would care. Seriously.

OK, here's a band called Brutal Death. Um, yeah, it's very spiny font. It gives you the feeling of *brutal*, and the fact that there's "death" in the name, you kind of get an idea of what this band might sound like, and you might not want to listen to it, or maybe you would — it depends.

Paul: Here's a band called the Bhopal Stiffs — that kind of dates them, because Bhopal was a thing that happened in the mid 80s, and who remembers Bhopal anymore? I don't know.

Martin: I remember the Bhopal Stiffs. I saw them about a hundred times. Love 'em.

OK, Brutal Juice. What the hell is a brutal juice? Can somebody tell me? It's like, "Oh man; this cranberry juice is so brutal." I don't get it. I don t know what this band's like.

Paul: How about Boris the Sprinkler?

Martin: Bad name. Bubblegum Christ. Why? Why would you name your band Bubblegum Christ? I don't know what that's about. And then there's Bubblegum Crash. You see, bad. These are bad band names. Why do we have these in the collection?

Oh, here you go. Buck Byron and the Little Seizures. That's a really interesting name. A little long.

Paul: How about Ice and the Iced?

Martin: Eddie and the Subtitles.

Paul: We didn't talk about the Social bands either, did we?

Martin: Like Social Distortion.

Paul: Social Unrest.

Martin: Social Outcast,

Paul: Seemed like there were a lot of Socials.

Martin: There are a lot of Socials. Youth is common, Social is common, what else? Anti — Anti-establishment, Anti-state, Antisect, Antischism…

Paul: Anti System,

Martin: The 5,6,7,8s, from Japan.

Paul: The 1,4,5s, from Texas.

Martin: The 808, they're Krishna band. Don't know why they're called that, though.

Paul: There's Stalag 13 and there's Stalag 17.

Martin: But see, that has a name. What about just numbers? There's 1096; there's a band called 15.

Paul: There's band called 13, there's a band called 16. There's a band called the 101ers. There's a band called Fifty Million, I think they win. Oh, no, there's a band called the 4000 Million; I think they win the highest number award.

Martin: There's a band called the Trillionaires.

Arwen: When you're sitting there trying to think of a band name, do you guys *like* that experience?

Paul: No.

Martin: No, it's very difficult. I've sat down with thesauruses and dictionaries, going though and trying to find a name that will work that had maybe some sort of edge to it, or sounds good and it works well with what your band is about. It's tough; it's tough to do. Everybody hates it.

Paul: And it's so hard to get all the band members to agree on a name. It's like, you come up with a name that you think is awesome, and if one of the band member hates it, that can't be your band name. It's so difficult.

Martin: Yeah, I had a little discussion when I wanted to call my band Limp Wrist. One of the band members wanted to call the band Crushed Skull. Would not have worked. A queer punk band called Crushed Skull? No. It wasn't happening.

Arwen: Is there a process that makes that easier, where you get to veto or whatever, or do you just fight it out?

Martin: I think you have to state your case. Everybody's trying to convince everybody else that their name they came up with is the best name. And then you'll get a member that's so passive and will just go, "I don't know, what do you guys think?"

Paul: And then you look at a collection like this, and you kind of start to think that all the good band names, *and* bad band names, have all been taken.

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On that encouraging note, my friends, goodbye, and good luck.

Arwen
PO Box 170291, San Francisco, CA 94117

No.

Punk Scene Report, Some Month, 2005!

Straight from the front lines, the nittiest and grittiest dirt on the world of Punk! Motherfucker! Before we get started, can we just expound for a second upon how much we *love* the word motherfucker? Because we do, and a lot. Motherfucker!

So, you ask, what's new in the Punk Scene, Johnny Tolerance and Don'tKair? We'll tell you, motherfucker! Last Thursday night (or Wednesday—we don't know, we were *drunk*) that one guy put on a hella rad show at that one bar. Also playing: that other band, the band with the sweet mohawks, and that one band with the liberty spikes (the ones that sounded kind of like THE CASUALTIES, not the ones that sounded like TOTAL CHAOS). While we were (mother)fucking shit up in the pit, we slammed right into that girl with the blue hair and the black hoodie and her friend with the BLANKS 77 patch on her buttflap. They hollered over to us, "Dude, did you see that one girl with the triple septum piercing puking in the alley? She had Sparks-tinted chunks hanging off her nose!" We must have missed that one but hopefully her boyfriend, that one dude with the tight black pants who writes that one zine with the Xs in the title, was holding back her hair (and holding his nose!). That straightedger is hilarious, especially since he's going out with a drunk! The best part of the night was hearing our favorite song, "Street Stalwarts." Our ass was totally kicked by these classic (Punk) lyrics: "Working-class zeroes / shaking our fists / the streets are the place / where we break shit / just because / I got funny lookin' hair / that doesn't mean / you shouldn't give me change / Up the Punx!" Man, that shit always moves us to (Punk) tears. At one point we were worried that the cops were going to bust the show, but then we turned around and there was a cop in the pit! And he was singing along to the old hardcore nugget, "Aggression," that that one band was playing! No way! That blew our mind! Afterwards we got a ride home from that one old dude with the devil-girl tattoo in his sweet old 60s Chevy. We talked to him and found out that he was the first bass player for THE RATS (the one from the 80s, of course) back when they wrote "Aggression." What a motherfucking night! Sorry kids, this one was 21+. Better luck next time! Or next year! Hah! Just yankin' your wallet chain, punklets—you'll get there soon. In the meantime, check out that other band at that one all-ages venue in the ghetto. You won't regret it!

Converse Count!
Black - 27
Red - 4
Blue - 1
Checkered - 1 (We kicked that ska-boy's motherfucking ass!)

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On Saturday we got in touch with our intellectual side and biked across the city to the Anarchist Bookfair in that one neighborhood with all the Thai restaurants. While we were perusing all the fine, fine anarchist products (available for reasonable prices!) we ran across that guy who spoke at that one workshop on how to get off the power grid. He told us about the drama with that other guy who had to be kicked out of the fair because someone told someone else who told someone else that he used a denigrating epithet towards womyn when referring to his ex-girlfriend at midnight last night when he was really drunk. What a motherfucker! Shortly after the zine-burning of his latest issue at the booth of Womyn Against Patriarchal Society (WAPS), we stopped to talk to that one girl with the dyed black dreadlocks and the NAUSEA patch on her buttflap who was selling the latest issue of *The Maoist-Anarchist Quarterly*. She gave us a sip of a tea that she said would heal Johnny's festering stomach ulcer, Don'tKair's inexplicable migraines, pneumonia, pinkeye, and the toe Johnny accidentally chopped off three months ago. It was made from a unique herbal blend that she said had hints of chamomile, tea tree oil, wormwood, cytoblyacin miasma extract, and nutritional yeast. We thought it tasted like moldy dirt, but we just smiled and moved along so we wouldn't get banned from the scene. We got tired pretty quickly from being so motherfucking hung over (why are these anarchists such early risers?!) so it looked less and less likely that we'd make it to the beachfront tofurkey roast later that evening. We quietly made our exit, stopping to chat with that one crusty dude in the black hoodie who we always see on that one street next to the college and his dog (you know, the one with half an ear and the bandana). They were hanging out outside because they couldn't afford the $5 entry fee, so they were spange-ing the anarchists instead. Anyway, we had to rush home to rest up for the show that night.

Converse Count!
Black - 140 (only 10 of which still had the Converse logo)
Red - 3

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That night at that one all-ages warehouse space with the graffiti all over the walls we saw a great motherfucking show! All the kids were dancing like crazy for every band—even between bands—even when there wasn't any music at all! Oh, the motherfucking (not literally—hah) energy of youth! We went outside after the first band (you know, that band that opens all those shows) to drink "juice" on the sidewalk and watch the kids choke on their first cigarette. Also drinking "juice" against the wall was the 30-something-year-old singer/guitar player from that one band that sounds kinda like CRIMPSHRINE mixed with THE REPLACEMENTS, only faster and sloppier. He was telling us about how he secretly likes that band THE KILLERS and how he's been learning a lot of GRATEFUL DEAD songs on acoustic guitar lately, but don't tell anybody (too bad, buddy!), when we were interrupted by that one 16-year-old with blue hair, black hoodie, and the GRAVY TRAIN!!!! patch on his buttflap. He really wanted the band to play that one song with the anthemic chorus and the "yeah, yeah, yeah" part in it tonight, even though he knew they hadn't played it in, like, forever. Singer/guitarist guy told him he doesn't even remember that song anymore and he was way too drunk anyway. Way to sell the kids out, guy! It was cool, though, because they played that other song with the anthemic chorus and the "yeah, yeah, whoa" part in it and all the kids went crazy. Of course, half the kids left by the time they went on because that one band that sounds kind of like a more punk rock MODEST MOUSE who have the 30-something-year-old singer/songwriter with the hair and those glasses who had just got written about in *Spin Magazine* played for an hour right before them. But the kids who didn't have curfew to meet (or who didn't motherfucking care!) stuck around and danced until the end of their 20-minute set. In fact, they kept dancing while sober people cleaned up around them, and they kept dancing after they'd been kicked out onto the street. They danced right into the long arms of the waiting cops, who quickly arrested them for underage drinking! Up the punx! Of course, we had to get out of there quick at that point so we wouldn't get arrested for distributing alcohol to minors, so we drove home drunk! On the way, we almost ran over Aaron Cometbus on his bike! Sorry, Aaron! But what a motherfucking night!

Converse Count!
Black - 5
Red - 6
Green - 1
Leopard Print - 10
Blue - 2
Mauve - 1.5
Yellow - .5
Pink - 40
Too graffiti-covered to tell - 12

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This is Don'tKair and Johnny Tolerance saying: Join us next time for another finely-detailed, tell-all, last word on the Punk Scene Report! Or maybe not!

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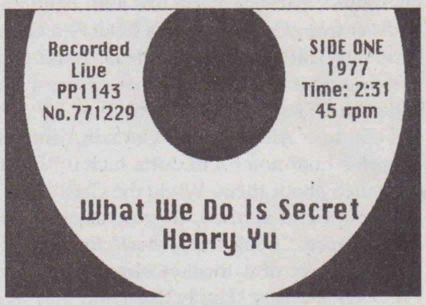
—Johnny Tolerance (with Don'tKair), P.O. Box 3026, Oakland, Ca. 94609... johngeek @gmail.com... Old NO columns are now available on the hideous monstrosity that is MySpace on the web, at www.myspace.com/noarchive. There'll be more politics next month. Really. I swear.



The Shawpunk Redemption

As much of you record toting types must be aware—and if ya ain't I'm telling you now—Bomp's Greg Shaw died not long ago, Bomp being the record label and the one time fanzine, purveyor of garage rock and its splinters, heavy on the scene and now no more. Course he left behind lotsa lotsa ephemera, detritus, and the like, collectibles and their ilk, nuggets and their brethren pebbles. That's what nooks and crannies are for! Anyhow, expect the goods to surface in some form or another, as Suzy Shaw is working with a few collector elite to sell off choice parts of the Shaw collection. Some appeared to make their way onto eBay recently, the most exciting piece being an original A&M promo Sex Pistols T-Shirt, *DESTROY*.

Fucking Up Your Turntable

CHINABOISE was a mid-70s bid by future MX-80 Sound member Rich Stim to "get a life." If that were to involve scoring girls, this'd hardly seem to be the apropos vehicle, unless he was looking for twisted flower children to bed. Communal in the number of varied players on these recordings, but obviously personal since it was really Rick and Dave Mahoney trying to get it together, there's a certain breeziness to it—probably supplied by Rich's sax—as on the fairly straight ahead folk of a girl-sung "Working Girl," to the more decidedly avant-garde, like "Self-Conscious Pisser." On this, the sax gets a little menacing and skronky, and Stim's anything-but-smooth, sorta-sung spoken vocals give it a double-edged sword that is evocative of the Numbers Band without the chops. Not punk with a capital N, but every self-serving nut has gotta graze on the likes of this every once in awhile. On Gulcher, purveyor of choice Midwest madness, natch.

On the other side of the world, WARSAW PAKT from London's class of '77 see their *Needle Time* LP reissued on the Captain Trip label, this time with a booklet of Mick Farren liner notes (in both languages, thankfully). While the band's name might be best known as a footnote in Joy Division history (their existence led the band Warsaw to change their name to Joy Division) and their record best known for having been recorded, pressed, and distributed in 24 hours, it also happens to be an excellent record, filled with fast, punky, and more than competently played songs. Other than the Brit accent, these guys may have looked more American than British (less fashionable, plus proto punk hair-dos), even presaging cow-punk on "Sick'n Tired." "Even Money" is a minor classic. A CD take on the original LP jacket results in a hard to manipulate package, sorta like John Holmes.

Also from Captain Trip is MALE, a German band a la THE CLASH in their look and sound, *Grosseinsatz* is a double CD that covers a career began in '77, and features their lone LP *Zensur and Zensur*. All sung in German, and with Japanese liner notes, I'm outta luck if I can find out much about them. While the Clash-isms are competent and spirited, they occasionally flash on brilliance. "1 Tag Dusseldorf" for example is nothing short of a thrill, which begins with a WIRE-circa-*Chairs Missing* like grind that speeds up into bright shiny bursts of post punk. "Polizei, Polizei" is as good as any Brit shit of the same era. They even followed the Clash into dub, which I coulda done without, but the punk stuff is pretty good shite. The bonus disc is promising. The stuff from '94 rocks real hard, and is a little less studied than their first LP. But their best song naturally was their very first, recorded in Dec '76, called "Shit Family." It clocks in at 36 seconds, and pre-dates their descent into Clash-ophilia.

Maybe Alternative Tentacles slogan should be changed from "Giving Art a Bad Name Since 1979" to "Taking Badness To Dizzying Heights," as they just keep shoveling it. BUZZOV*EN, is junior varsity post crust thuggish-ness that shoulda stayed in the outta print, early 90s pile. Who needs nostalgia when you've got a case of bad déjà vu?

Speaking of which, when you begin to write lyrics like "If I had a Yugo, I'd drive through Hurricane Hugo," isn't it time to hang it up? Also on Alternative Tentacles and leading me to seriously revisit my policy of reviewing everything that is submitted to me, DASH RIP ROCK's *Recyclone* is pure bad boogie nothingness. QED.

Tuneful garage-y punk from BLACK DAHLIAS on Mario's Plastic Idol records, whose releases I always like 'cos he doesn't put out many and the ones he does are done up obviously quality all the way. Three blasts of the fun stuff worthy of spin.

Rave Up spews out a coupla polyvinylchloride platters from its extensive vaults…THE SHADY LADY release *Raving Mad* is a foray into new territory beyond its signature Lost Punk Nuggets. The new series is called "American High Energy 70s Rock 'n' Roll," this one being Volume #2, and while the definition of "punk" was sometimes stretched in their Lost Punk Nuggets series, High Energy is, at least on this LP, a guitar solo rama lama shake down of cowbell glam excuse for the genre. While Thundertrain would epitomize that territory, this is barely salvageable but more or less the type of boogie that we struggled to get away from while growing up. Memories of getting the shit getting kicked out of me by farmer hick closeted boy-girls come to mind while the Hammond B3 and Moogs swirl in my head. Early 70s guitar solo hell with the occasional harmonica kick in the nuts.

Better is Rave Up's reissue of Chicago's EPICYCLE output from back in the day, those being and LP and a few 45s. "You're Not Gonna Get It" starts things, this supposedly being a monster track and the reason the 45 goes for three hun or so. It pretty much befuddles me because it's a lukewarm rant at best and about as KBD as my BVD. Besides, these guys always aspired for something bigger. With mature classic pop songs like "Radical Attitude," these boys had chops but just like THE SHOES, didn't have the pin up good looks to propel them into Tiger Beat. Running from the crystalline to the hard rockin' pop, this is mostly not punk but pretty darn well crafted poop.

Our friends at the Discourage Record Store in Portland have their first record out on their own eponymous label, and me gots the heppa rare 200 press version of it, The NICE BOYS 45, them ex of the bands EXPLODING HEARTS and the RIFFS. Each copy auto'd by the band and a real low number (mine was 67). Tho' someone drew a spurting peen a la GG on mine, remember these are The Nice Boys and they really are and they know how to rock (discourage@discouragerecords.com).

Video Loco

AMP Magazine's *Video Archive for the Ages Volume 1* is a comp of 18 punk videos for the kids…that is punk served up post Metallica, post rap, post tattoo chain stores. THE BRIEFS' cartoon punk is the most retro and amusing, while COMMUNIQUE apes 80s dream pop to near classic effect. The NETWORK makes a bid as the new MUMMIES. Way too many of the other bands do the scorched unintelligible vocal heavy riffing shtick in the metallic and demonic (and just plain ick) vein.

Although much more attuned to my youth but unfortunately not any more relevant (as time did tell), is THE DREAM SYNDICATE, whose aptly named *Weathered and Torn* first came out on Atavistic's VHS series in the early 90s, now reissued on the shiny silver platter. Filmed circa their major label *Ghost Stories* LP, when Steve Wynn would even admit to liking THE TRAVELING WILBURY'S, the band is just too squeaky clean. Led by collegiate pin up boy Wynn, their plodding Americana sounds indicative of that era, though it appealed mostly to Europeans, who slurped up bands like the PONTIAC BROTHERS and THIN WHITE ROPE that were more or less ignored in the US. No faster did a band decline after their first magnum opus LP (*The Days of Wine and Roses*) and stick around for so many painful albums after as the Dream Syndicate. And all these years later, it's not only irrelevant but downright embarrassing.

Much revered band TURBONEGRO broke up at the height of their popularity when lead singer Hank's heroin addiction overtook his abilities. *ResErection* documents their long hiatus and then their ultimate reunion. It's an amazing journey. Hank chills out by leading a very quiet life out at his grandparents' idyllic little fishing village where he works as the tour guide for the local Fishing Village Museum and deejays at the town radio station, spinning and even singing along with old maritime ballads in all earnestness. He hardly seems like he was ever the wild front man. The journey then takes us to one of the members meeting up with Hank for the first time in four years to pitch the idea of a reunion, then to the band's first rehearsal together, pre-show jitters at their first major event, and then the triumphant show itself. It's practically Hollywood hard to believe, but man it is real. When they play "Hobbit Motherfuckers" it's like Rocky standing on the steps of the Philadelphia art museum fists in the air in exhilarative triumph. They're some kinda monster. Included is a lot of live footage, a must for any self-serving megalomaniac.

The shit hits the fans on GG Allin and the Murder Junkies' *Savage South 1992 Tour*, captured on video in varying shades of brown and red. Thank god for pixilation. While GG manages to menace the audience in Austin and South Carolina, the San Antonio kids don't fear the pooper as they run up one by one on stage guerilla warfare style, deck GG and then jump off. Finally the show ends in mayhem as a bunch of them rush the stage and beat the (whatever remaining, which ain't much) crap outta him. Lotsa blood drawn via self-flagellation in the head with a microphone and running glass across the chest, Iggystyle. The music is plodding anti-music constipation, but that's hardly the point. The retardo neanderthalic exploits are the main draw, and they are put forth with as little thought put in as possible.

Fan mail from a third striker now in the can for the next four years at Sacramental, that being our man Alfred #1483739. He informs us of a stint at Napa State Mental Hospital after being found incompetent to stand trial…we commiserate by answering his one and only question, which is, where can he buy The Cramps at Napa State Mental Institution? Well, we recommend he check out the MVD (music video distributor) website (www.mvdb2b.com) where all sorts of these very best things can be bought and cherished.

We pluggeth the blog at which these words can also be found in addition to the usual *MRR* newsprint: www.whatwedoissecret.blogspot.com. Submissions by mail to Henry at 46 Roosevelt Circle, Palo Alto, CA 94306, email at terasearch@yahoo.com

RALL DEAL

"A society," wrote Fyodor Dostoevsky, "can be ranked by how it treats its prisoners." Former UN secretary general Peres de Cuellar said: "You measure the justice of society by how it treats its children." Judging by the recent round up of two teenage girls, America is falling short by both measures.

They've vanished into the netherworld of a Homeland Security gulag and their story has already disappeared from the headlines, but the shocking case of two 16-year old girls from New York City arrested a month ago ought to inspire outrage among every American worthy of the name. Since the government's reasons for the girls' imprisonment could apply to virtually any teenager, it should also spark fear.

Like many rebellious teens, I fought with my mother. Local police, called to my home during at least one particularly impressive clash of wills and voices, talked us back into the land of the calmly reasonable. Then they left.

Like many young people, I was fascinated by morbid, violent subjects. After I turned in an essay depicting a political assassination from the killer's viewpoint, my creative writing teacher sent me to talk to my guidance counselor. After I assured him that I had no desire to knock off any politicians, he returned me to class.

A quarter century later, my mom and I are best friends and I haven't done anything the Secret Service ought to worry about. Right now, however, two girls from New York City are rotting in a HomeSec prison in Pennsylvania for doing nothing more than I did—one for fighting with her parents and writing an essay, the other accused of being her friend.

In early March, the *New York Times* reported on April 7, one girl's parents "went to the local police station house" in the Queens Village neighborhood because "their teenage daughter ...had defied their authority." Things calmed down and the parents, believing their daughter had been scared straight, asked the NYPD to forget the whole thing.

It was too late for that.

Without a warrant, NYPD detectives and federal agents burst into the girl's home (no wonder they don't have time to look for Osama!) where they "searched her belongings and confiscated her computer and the essays that she had written as part of a home schooling program," says her family. "One essay concerned suicide... [that] asserted that suicide is against Islamic law." The family is Bangladeshi. They are Muslim. That, coupled with the mere mention of suicide bombing in her essay, was enough to put the fuzz on high alert.

Although she is conservative and devout, the girl and her parents vigorously deny that she is an Islamist extremist (not that such opinions are illegal), but this is post-9/11 America and post-9/11 America is out of its mind.

Based solely on an essay written by one of the two, the FBI says both girls are "an imminent threat to the security of the United States based upon evidence that they plan to become suicide bombers." But the feds admit that they have no evidence to back their suspicions. Nothing.

"There are doubts about these claims, and no evidence has been found that such a plot was in the works," one Bush Administration official admitted to the *Times*. "The arrests took place after authorities decided it would be better to lock up the girls than wait and see if they decided to become terrorists," another told the *New York Post*. The same logic could be used to justify locking up any Muslim, or anyone at all. Heck, maybe that's the idea.

The Bangladeshi girl, who was home-schooled and wears a veil, says she never even met her outgoing and more Americanized "co-conspirator" from Guinea before the cops accused them of plotting to do...something. Maybe.

She says FBI agents threatened to deport her parents and place her American-born siblings, a four-month-old baby and an eleven-year-old, in foster care unless she confessed.

Even in PATRIOT Act-era America, alleged fantasies of martyrdom aren't a crime. So HomeSec's ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) is holding both two girls as illegal immigrants—one for entering the US without an inspection, the other for overstaying her visa. And even that charge rests on razor-thin ice: "This is a girl who's been in this country since she was two years old," the Guinean girl's teacher says. Ditto for the one from Bangladesh. Holding kids accountable for the actions of their parents is crazy, which is why immigration authorities don't usually do it. Two-year-old babies don't wade across the Rio Grande or overstay their visas. Deporting American teenagers—American in every way that matters—to countries they've never even visited is equally insane.

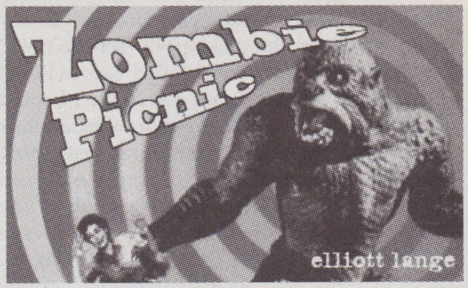
I would be the first to applaud the FBI if they had arrested two proven would-be suicide bombers before they had the chance to strike. If they have evidence to that effect, they should make it public and bring charges in open court. But that's clearly not the case here.

When this story first broke I didn't write about it because I assumed that a public outcry would soon lead to its reasonable resolution. Sadly, this has not happened.

Homes searched without a warrant, kids thrown in prison for thoughts real and imagined, people's lives destroyed by an out-of-control federal government—will Americans speak up for what's right? Please call and write your congressman and senator to demand the release of the two girls from Queens.

Ted Rall, PO Box 1134, New York NY 10027. Email: chet@rall.com. Website: www.rall.com

New books: *Wake Up, You're Liberal!: How We Can Take America Back from the Right* (Soft Skull Press, 336 pp., price $14.95), is out now, available everywhere. *Generalissimo El Busho: Essays and Cartoons on the Bush Years* (NBM Publishing, 208 pp., $19.95 hardback/$15.95 paperback) is also out. The speaking tour is over but if you're at a high school or college with a budget for bringing in speakers, I'd be happy to come to your city.



Holy Christ on a crutch, there's been so much good shit coming out recently I hope I can fit everything into the column. I'll start off with my most recent acquisition: straight from the "Too Metal for Maximum" reject bin comes the *Exquisite Cadaveric Hormon Cocktails* LP from one of my current faves in the gore-grind scene, Switzerland's EMBALMING THEATRE. I don't know what it is about these guys, but I really feel they do something different from the rest of the endless CARCASS-clones. Both the vocals and the guitar seem to have an overall more sinister, macabre tinge to them, plus they're just fucking catchy as all hell, with great lyrics all based on real-life atrocities. The internet-based voluntary cannibalism in Germany a couple years back, dead babies in a Japanese cupboard, and Egyptian shit-workers drowning in the blood of an abattoir all lend themselves perfectly as lyrical accompaniment to EMBALMING THEATRE's deranged compositions. This LP (on Power it Up Records, www.power-it-up.de) combines the *Hormones from the Dead* MCD on No Escape Records and the *Split-Organ* CD (a split with TORTURED INCIDENT on Reverb Productions) but since both are essentially brand new and completely obscure, this still acts as a more or less new full-length. Don't miss it.

Next up, two big releases this month from Hydra Head, on the ultra fast and ultra slow ends of the spectrum. First up, it's the long-awaited final release from DISCORDANCE AXIS, *Our Last Day*. Seems to me a bit odd and not a little misleading to be marketing this as a DISCORDANCE AXIS release, seeing as only two and a half (I'll explain) of the 21 tracks even have a member of DISCORDANCE AXIS playing—this is really more of a tribute or covers record than anything, but I'll try to break it down track by track as a public service so you can decide for yourself whether you need the annoying DVD case it's housed in on your shelf. The first two tracks are the actual DISCORDANCE AXIS songs, one of which, "Sega Bass Fishing" is supposedly a cover of said video game's theme song, though having never played the game myself, I can't say. It's pretty rockin' all the same. The other track is standard DISCORDANCE AXIS fare. It's good but not incredible and I swear I've heard one of those riffs before.

Next we have ten tracks of computerized DISCORDANCE AXIS songs done on someone's midi under the name CIDE PROJEKT. Initially appalled at the idea, I have to admit that these turned out to be my favorite part of the record. Something about the cyclical, mechanized nature of DISCORDANCE AXIS's song structures makes the midi application highly suitable. Plus the drum programming is dead-on. My favorite is the "guitar picking" of "Killing Yield" which would be the perfect soundtrack to Pitfall if you could program your own music. I could completely do without the drum 'n' bass remix of "Macro" though, whose endurance-testing five-minute duration pales next to the sixteen minute MERZBOW remix. I suppose all of you know by now whether you love or hate MERZBOW or ever need to hear him again. Other than that you get a smattering of competent covers by GATE, MORTALIZED, and notably, MELT BANANA and the ever-crushing NOISEAR. Last is the "half" I was referring to earlier—a one-song preview of Jon Chang's new band, GRIDLINK, who are pretty devastating uber-tech grind in their own right. Overall this release is a mixed bag, but one that still reveals a few more-than-worthwhile nuggets. You might as well accept it—you're probably gonna break down and buy this some point.

Counter-balancing the speed is a new CDEP from the mighty PELICAN, whose *Australasia* full-length and self-titled debut are some of the finest examples of doomy yet technical, melodic yet crushingly heavy instrumental soundscapes ever. This new effort *March into the Sea* features one new song and a ten minute remix courtesy of Justin Broadrick. I have to say straight off, that despite being a huge fan of the new JESU albums, I think Broadrick's remix (of "Angel Tears" off *Australasia*) just sucks. He takes the one quasi-chorus refrain of the song and milks it to death while over-saturating the whole affair with a nauseating amount of keyboards, not unlike a novice sandwich maker with his first jar of mayonnaise. A little is all you need. But forget it, cuz the twenty minutes of monumental riffing and masterful metallic beauty you get with the title track are all you need. The song undergoes enough permutations to comprise a complete album on its own. This is supposedly just a warm-up for a new full-length due later this year, so we all have something to look forward to in our miserable little lives.

There have been a number of noteworthy demos floating down the pipes lately too. First off, it's the new three-song demo from Rochester, NY's SKODAG. Rising from the ashes of the perpetually underrated KALIBAS (still one of the best ever), SKODAG features three of the five members of the last KALIBAS line-up from their final *Enthusiastic Corruption* EP, and while the only consistent member from the original line-up is Jody on guitar (who joined after things didn't pan out with KILL THE CLIENT in Texas), this still sounds remarkably similar to that great band. In fact I really can't find too many ways to comment on their differences except for the fact that the new singer growls lower in a more death metal fashion than Pat's manic screams. My only minor complaint is that the bass, much like the *Corruption* EP, is a bit distractingly high in the mix. Other than that, everything's here; there's plenty of blasting, death metal technicality, and flawless stop-on-a-dime changes. Can't wait to hear more. Demos are just two bucks, so get in touch: www.skodag.tripod.com or email humanstew@hotmail.com.

From the far reaches of the international scene, Green of the band LAMANT from Belarus sent me their latest demo. The layout alone of this 21-song CD-R demo is fantastic— a six-panel over-sized foldout with great photos and artwork. Green also included along a couple copies of his zine *Xerotica,* which has his own similarly unique oddball drawings throughout. Unfortunately I couldn't read a word as the whole thing (and the lyrics in the CD too) is written in Cyrillic, but just to be all Beavis & Butthead-y about it for a second, the alphabet is pretty cool looking and hey, iPod's speak Cyrillic. Who knew. Oh right, I haven't even mentioned the music yet. LAMANT plays noisy, high-energy, thrashing, screaming hardcore / power violence with a good mix of tempos and riffs and a cover of DOOM's "Police Bastard." Solid stuff. You can hear the whole thing here: www.xerotika.astashou.com/lamant-mp3.html. Or better yet, don't be a cheap skate and send a few bucks to help someone living under far worse circumstances than you who's still rocking his nards off. Email zoomdoom@mail.ru for more info.

From Bullfight Records in London comes their first release, a split 7" between MFKZT and AMONG THE MISSING. MFKZT is the more immediately appealing; the singer's voice is pretty fucking insane. Basically if there were a human who sounded most like Waldo from HATEBEAK, it would be this guy. The drum-machine-led grind behind him can't help but remind me of the likes of AGORAPHOBIC NOSEBLEED, and there's some nice ax wizardry going on in the guitar department. Definitely looking forward to hearing more from these guys and it's especially nice since, as Carson from Bullfight and I discussed, there's such a complete lack of grind coming out of the UK these days. On the flipside, AMONG THE MISSING is no slouch either, though they're taking a more stoned and sludgy approach ala 16 or CATTLEPRESS. One long-ish track perfect for a quality head-nodding bong session. Contact info: MFKZT: www.mfkzt.co.uk, AMONG THE MISSING: www.tenpoundsoffuck.com, Bullfight Records: krimethinc4@hotmail.com.

I've been bitching about the lack of quality shows in the area for a while now (read: too lazy to go to shows) but there's been plenty to get me out of the house lately and in the near future as well. First up was the surprisingly amazing ZOMBI from Pittsburgh, whose recent album of GOBLIN/JOHN CARPENTER worship I'd been delaying judgment on till I could witness how the keyboard/drum duo pulled off their set live. Well, they did so flawlessly and now I'm loving their Relapse debut, *Cosmos* too. Soon after seeing them, I finally watched *Assault on Precinct 13* for the first time and I appreciated ZOMBI all the more after hearing how well they pay tribute to their source of inspiration, while still adding their own touch.

Last weekend was one of the better shows I've seen all year — an all-local, all-grind show at the SPAM warehouse with MUTUAL ABUSE, BRUTAL DEATH, GO LIKE THIS, POPULATION REDUCTION, and GODSTOMPER — a full bill to say the least. MUTUAL ABUSE, the newest band, started things off with some raw, stripped-down grind as their bassist is currently enjoying the lap of luxury in military school. They've got some good riff ideas and I'm looking forward to seeing how they progress. I thought the same about BRUTAL DEATH a year ago and now they're a seriously brutal force to be reckoned with. I really haven't ever seen a band improve so much in such a short period of time—these kids are dedicated to churning out the best of the purest old-school grind. Just straight-up Horrified Scum all the way and the crowd went nuts. Equally punishing was GO LIKE THIS, a new band comprised of members from such West Bay bands as AGENTS OF SATAN, NO LESS, and THE RIFFMERCHANTS. They laid down the BLACK FLAG-on-speed-metal-crank riffs one after the other. I loved the trade-off vocals, and the band was super tight and refreshingly varied.

Next up was POPULATION REDUCTION, who I've raved about previously in these pages. These two death-grind zombie-punching Ohio-to-San-Francisco transplants are one of those irritatingly virtuosic bands that can take the stage completely drunk and/or stoned and still play the most technically intricate and blazingly fast shit in existence. It's quite disheartening for amateur musicians and you'd think they'd be more considerate, but they make up for it by being super cool guys in person and on stage. They also passed me a copy of their *Each Birth a New Disaster* promo, which I think is just a sampler of stuff from their new recording they've just completed. Not sure what's going to come of the new material (besides an upcoming split 7" with Maryland's MAGRUDERGRIND) but the three tracks on the demo are great — far better sounding than the still good *Terror Tactics* demo and fast and furious as ever. For vasectomy photos and more, go to: www.populationreduction.net and say hi.

Finally, GODSTOMPER closed things out in typically bulldozing fashion, with more noise and instrument destruction perpetrated per capita than anyone else. It's somehow been a few years since I've seen them last and it was great to see that the Barfo Brothers have lost none of their energy and vitriol after all this time. It was great to see so many people into the extreme (and thanks to Robert for setting up the show), and for the first time in a long while, it seems there just may be a verified grind scene in the Bay Area.

I'll wrap things up for now, but before I do, I'm gonna have to end things on a downer once again, as I need to send out proper acknowledgment to the passing of Yasuo Satoh, former bassist of Tokyo's HELLCHILD, who killed himself in early April. I can't say I was close friends with him, but having worked for the label that released their records here in the States, I did spend some time around him and his bandmates when HELLCHILD toured the States in the summer of 2000. Soon after their return to Japan, things with the band went south and they disbanded—as did the label here—and I lost touch with them. I didn't know him well at all, but he was always quite courteous, friendly, and appreciative of our help as well as a killer musician in a killer band. He will be missed.

Well, as always, get in touch. You'll unfortunately have to go without my ramblings next month, as I'll be taking the month off to prowl about the waters and mountains of Venezuela with m' lady, getting jungle rot, hunting for anacondas, and trying not to embarrass myself too bad with my non-existent Spanish. If anyone knows of any Venezuelan death/grind/hardcore bands send 'em my way, but Renzo from I SHIT ON YOUR FACE (thanks dude) says there's only KRUEGER, an old death/thrash outfit from Caracas. I'll keep my eyes peeled. — Elliott, 701 Broderick St, SF, CA 94117, cromlaughs@hotmail.com

"I was gonna give you five dollars and now you dogging me. Dogging your favorite uncle just cost you five dollars." – Dock Ellis [MLB pitcher who in 1970 threw a no-hitter while on LSD] as quoted in *Chinmusic* zine

My Mother Wears Combat Boots
Jessica Mills

Good news! My kid has actually stuck by her five-year-old proclamation that she now likes rock 'n' roll and doesn't think it's stupid anymore. I can overlook the backsliding on other things that accompanied her pride and glory in turning five. It's no big deal to still help the kid get her ass wiped or to let her get some boobie snuggles in when she needs help getting settled for sleep. The steadily increasing-in-frequency after school and work dance parties are most definitely making up for it.

It's surprising to me how much I'd settled for the *Annie* soundtrack, her *Songs for Bumpy Wagon Rides* CD, or the Philadelphia Chickens. Now that's she's actually tolerating me taking turns with the Hello Kitty boom box, I'm getting reacquainted with some music I love but haven't listened to in months or years.

The following might be tolerated as music reviews, but they're honestly just some random commentary by my girl in response (or by me in response to her response) to what I've been listening to with her lately. In no particular order:

ONION FLAVORED RINGS "Used To It" LP - "You want to dance with me? Turn it up!" and "I can hoola hoop as long as this song!" (She's talking about "Addiction," and lasts about half way through the song before she stops and says, "Hey, how long is this song anyway?") *[C'mon, it's only like two minutes! –Ed.]*

RAMONES "Anthology" CD – "Dance party, yeah baby!" Whenever we listen to the Ramones, she'll have the "Sheena is a Punk Rocker" chorus stuck in her head the rest of the day. Doesn't matter where we are: in line at the grocery store, waiting at a red light on our bike, or doing art projects, she's unconsciously singing it. And for the record, I've never met a little kid whose favorite punk band (if they have a favorite punk band, that is) isn't the Ramones. Makes perfect sense, really. If you don't already catch what I'm saying, just think about it for a second and you will.

DR. DREIDEL cassette – "Uh, Mom, he's saying *dick*! This isn't for kids," and "What's pussy?" Uh, my bad. I was pretty excited about getting a copy of this tape again after not having one for years. Guess I forgot about the mountains of hilariously ridiculous, rhyming sexual innuendo that would be really confusing to a five year old. So I gave the tape a time out and put on ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT instead.

RADON "We Bare All" CD – "No! Turn this off! I hate it! When it started, it scared my lizard away!"

WHISKEY & CO. CD – "This is good singing. The music is OK. I remember Kim was my neighbor with Katie next door. I didn't know she was a good singer."

RINGWURM CD – "Raawwwrrrr! Raawwwrrrr!" That's her impersonation of Joe's vocals as she throws her fists in the air and head back, stomp-dance-chasing her Daddy around the living room, followed by, "Slow down so we don't bump Mom's gas tanks. I don't want to explode and never see you again." (The gas tanks are the propane and oxygen I use for silversmithing. And yes, I know the living room isn't the best place for them.)

THE BUTCHIES "Are We Not Femme" CD – "Is this Joan Jett?"

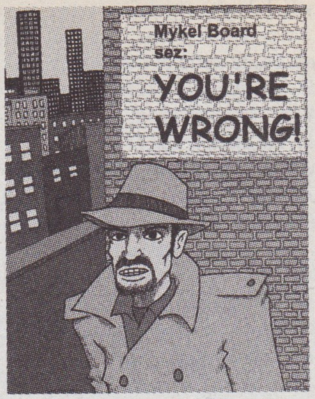
HOT WATER MUSIC "No Division" CD – "Uh, this is bad. Is it time for my guitar lesson yet, Mom?" and "Will you teach me what the cheerleaders said?" About three songs in she realized, "Hey, this is Chuck! Mom, don't tell him I said it was bad, OK? Do the other ones know me? Don't tell them I said it was bad either, OK?"

PLACENTA "Ugly" – Immediate bopping about ensues, followed by day-long sing-songing "La la la la la, la la la la la, I'm ugly," similar to the bouts of "Sheena is a Punk Rocker" described above.

Immaculate Rejection CD – "You pushed me out to THIS?!" The answer to that one is - Yes, it's true; I did. And it remains one of my most favorite recordings of any band I've ever loved. I wonder if she'll ever forgive me and love it, too.

***

Punkparents, get in touch. PO Box 220331 / Hollywood, FL 33022 or yardwideyarns@hotmail.com



Since all behavior has a function, there can be no "dysfunctional" behavior. The term is a scientistic (sic) euphemism for "disapproved." — Thomas Szasz

[As usual, names have been changed to protect my friends and my ass.]

It's Monday. The clock radio rouses me out of my beer-sleep. The Yankees lost, something-teen to two. I whack the snooze button and drift off. In ten minutes the radio is on again, telling me the subways are *on or close*. Yeah right.

I flip the off button and curl fetally on the bed. Tensing my stomach, I blow a massive beer-fart between the sheets. The Pilsneresque fragrance wafts to my barlyed brain, acting like chloroform. I'm once more asleep, dreaming of Yankees who are *not* on or close.

A few minutes later, I drift out of sleep and force myself into a sitting position. Somehow I stand and wobble to my desk and the table next to it. I push the ON buttons on my old laptop and ancient desktop computers. Flashing Microsoft blue, they begin their own struggles to wake up. While they boot, I waddle naked into the kitchen to see if any dregs of yesterday's coffee remain. As I reach for the coffee pot, I notice that the hairs under my arm are stuck together in a black crusty mass.

There's about three inches of black goo left from yesterday. I pour it into the least filthy cup in the sink. That cup I put into the microwave and go back to bed to take care of my morning protrusion.

Flesh in hand, I doze off again, expecting the microwave DING will wake me up. It would, except that I forgot to turn it on.

Sometime later, I awaken to two bright computer screens. One flashes red. ERROR. DISK'S USAGE TABLE ALLOCATES TOO MUCH OR TOO LITTLE SPACE FOR THESE FILES. WOULD YOU LIKE TO CORRECT THESE ERRORS? YES OR NO?

I hit the ENTER key, figuring the computer knows better than me. Then I go back to the kitchen and press the microwave buttons for *one minute and thirty seconds*. This time it beeps when it's done.

I take the hot coffee, and a piece of matzo left over from Passover, and sit in front of the computers. I gaze at the screens, waiting for the words and images to make some kind of sense.

While I wait for my eyes to focus, I call my voicemail. [Aside: I hate the telephone. It's an evil intrusion into my private world. I turn the ringer off. I don't even know when anyone calls. Twice a day, I check my voicemail and call people back. Some people. Eventually.]

Good morning, this is Citibank MasterCard calling. We're wondering if you know that your account... DELETE! NEXT!

Good afternoon, Mr. Board, this is Al Schweitzer from American Express... DELETE! NEXT!

Hello Mykel, comes a gentle almost-boy voice, *This is Paul Ratner speaking... calling... I hope you remember me... We met at the Toronto Anarchist gathering... convention... a long time ago. I think you were chasing after me, but Dave from MDC got me... You lost...* This one I let play on.

And on it went. In fact, it went on so long the voicemail cut it off... twice. It's too much for me to quote here, but the gist is that he, Paul, and his friend, Gloria, are coming to The City for an *Intersex Conference.* The conference lasts two days and *could we please sleep at your place during that time?*

If I hadn't already jerked off, I'd do it now. Two sexy she-males sleeping at my apartment. And a whole conference, a city full of prancing trannies? How 'bout a party at my place? I wonder if it's too early to call back.

Turning to my computer, I delete a couple of *"item unsold"* messages from eBay. And laugh at, then delete hustler spam from "a Russian girl" and a "Malaysian young woman," telling me how intrigued they were with my profile on "the dating service." Could I please write back to them and tell them more about myself? They love me. Yeah right.

Then I begin to daydream about the she-males soon to visit. I unzip my pants and slip my hand downward. As I do, my gaze drifts toward the clock.

Damn! I gotta leave for work. I'm already late. I'll call the visitors when I get back home. I just hope they don't find another place in the meantime.

I arrive at work an hour late. I've missed one class. The boss is pissed. As usual, my fellow teachers glance skyward when I arrive.

"The train was late," I say.

After work, I watch the guy playing Chinese music in the subway station. He plays a Koto, and a Mongolian instrument, a kind of square guitar with a horsehead head. He looks Mongolian to me, but I've never heard him speak.

When I get back home I immediately call Paul.

"Yo!" I say. "You need a place to stay?"

"Yes," he says. "You know. This conference. It's so wonderful. I used to think I was the only one... you know... like me. But since I met Gloria... some people call her Ralph... she's very accepting of both names...I know I'm not alone. Now this conference...there'll be so many...all together...there was this professor from Stony Brook. I thought he'd be there, but he's in Europe. But others...from all over...I think...I mean...You can't imagine."

"Sure I can," I say, unzipping my fly.

"So Mykel," the voice continues, "do you think it would be possible... I mean would it be too much trouble... I know there are two of us... we wouldn't be there much... Mykel? Are you all right? You sound out of breath?"

"I... I... I...aaaaaaaaaaah! I couldn't be finer," I say wiping my hand on a handy sock. "What time will you be here? I work 'til nine."

"That's okay," says Paul, "the conference lasts until eight or so and then probably... we're gonna go out to... you know... dinner or something. We could meet you... I mean if it's okay... It is okay, isn't it?"

I nod into the phone.

"We could meet you at 9:30."

"Fine," I tell him. "I'm looking forward to it."

Flash ahead. It's 9:30. I stand in the hallway, next to the buzzer. I'm wearing my tightest black jeans, and a white on black DYKES WITH BIKES t-shirt. The second they ring the bell, I can let them in. Then they'll come up the elevator and we'll be in a night of bliss.

9:32. They're late. What if they don't show up? I changed the sheets, and it's not even March.

9:37, Shit. They're not coming. Damn it! After all those...BZZZZZ. The doorbuzzer sounds.

I push the TALK button. "Who is it?" I sing into the intercom.

"It's Paul and Gloria," comes the return voice, "you don't have to call her Gloria though. Some people call her Ralph... and she's very accepting of both..."

I push the DOOR OPEN button and hold it a few seconds. Through the intercom, I hear the scrape of two people carrying bags, entering the elevator and coming up. I open my door. Then step into the hall, watching the elevator with erect anticipation.

The elevator door opens.

In jails, I hear they use saltpeter. It's a kind of spice that tightens the capillaries around the penis, preventing blood flow. It's used to limit the amount of sex among prisoners by limiting the amount of erections among prisoners.

Here arrives my saltpeter.

Paul is three or four inches taller than I. He's square shouldered, as all-American looking as a loaf of Wonderbread. He's got red rosy cheeks with a pointed chin and nose and absolutely no facial hair. But he's pasty white and pumped, like Macaulay Culkin on steroids. A gorilla with a little boy face.

And Gloria? You're probably too young to remember a *Saturday Night Live* character called, Pat. Pat was a chubby sexually ambiguous person whose humor lied in the fact that she... or he... was so unattractive that nobody cared—just a roly-poly roundness, as sexy as a soccer ball. Gloria is Pat.

I invite them into my apartment freezing a smile on my face. They tell me about the conference and how they look forward to it. They tell me about life in a small town on Long Island. About how they met and learned there were more people *like them.* About how Paul was born without the ability to produce testosterone, so he has to take it through injection and that "bulks him up." And how Gloria never felt right in any case. And... and... and... They go on.

"It's late," I finally manage to say. "I need to get up to go to work tomorrow."

I start taking off my clothes. They look at each other and do the same. Both strip to their underwear... Paul in standard tighty-whities, Gloria, boxers. Me, my sexy black bikinis... that I regret wearing at the moment. Quickly, I climb into my loft bed as my visitors huddle on the couch below. They talk.

I turn off the light but am unable to sleep. The two chatter on the small couch, like girls at a slumber party. I turn on the light again and pick up some bedside reading, *Darkly Dreaming Dexter,* and try to read myself to sleep.

[Aside: Here's my book recommendation. Get this one! It's great. It's about a detective who is also a serial killer. But he only kills serial killers. Weird as hell and gory!]

About 2AM the chatter stops. They've fallen asleep, and so can I. My mind drifts to my fantasy of before. A Lucky Chang Waitress. A she-male. A slim twenty-year-old with cock, balls and tits... and all of it beautiful. A tight stomached, ethnic beauty who... who... What's that sound?

I'm pulled from my half-sleep into full consciousness. One of the two is snoring louder than a Slayer concert. What the fuck? I throw *Darkly Dreaming Dexter* at the couch. The snoring stops.

The next morning, another loud body noise wakes me up. Farting, immediately followed by giggles. Then more farting. And more giggles.

Intersex? Instead of the best of both worlds, I get the worst. Giggling and snoring. It's she-males turned inside out. Instead of a beautiful girl with a dick, I get non-stop talking and farting. What have I done to deserve... OK, better ask another question.

Tonight we're eating dinner at a Vietnamese restaurant. Gloria wears torn jeans and a HWA t-shirt. S/he tells me HWA means *Hermaphrodites with Attitude.* I'm a little surprised there're enough to have such an organization, let alone such an attitude.

Gloria holds the menu a few inches away from her face and squints. "The light in here is really bad," she says.

My 80-year old father is blind in one eye. The other is going fast. I know that *the light in here is really bad,* means, "I can't see and I need some help with this, but I'm embarrassed to ask."

"I'll read it to you," I tell him/her.

"I'm not blind," s/he says, reacting as if I'd insulted him/her. "I just can't see in this light."

It's at this moment that the drums roll. The horns come in. The lightbulbs flash. Tinker Bell arrives and touches her wand to my forehead. *I get it.*

Suddenly, I get that these people feel lonely, frustrated, and picked on like the rest of us. They have pride in what they can and can't do, like you do. Suddenly, I see that they have to go out every day and face the world knowing that, not only are they different from everyone else, but the first thing people see about them is that difference.

They don't choose to be freaks. They don't live their lives to be different from everyone else. In fact, they struggle to join everyone. *I can see just as good as you can. I'm just like you except...*

Suddenly, I understand that when I fart, it's just a guy farting. But when they fart, it's some special *thing*. They aren't supposed to fart or laugh about it like ordinary people do. Suddenly, I feel like shit for asking them to live up to my image of *intersex*. Do I live up to their image of... I don't know what?

"Hey, guys... er... people," I say. "This meal's on me."

"You don't have to do that," says Paul.

"Yes I do," I answer.

Flash ahead about two months. I met Sid almost as many years ago as I'd met Paul. I don't remember the details, but I do remember that he gave me a cassette (or was it a fanzine?) called COPS HATE POETRY. I remember being amused that, for the first time in my life, I found myself on the same side of an issue as cops.

[Aside: Yeah, I've changed a bit since then, though my poetry tastes are still pretty limited. But that's another column.]

As I remember, Sid's a shlubby Jewish guy, kind of egg-shaped, very sincere. I also vaguely remember there was something eager about him. As if he wanted to jump into new things with both feet, and eyes closed. He told me about some weird combination of hobbies — not AK-47s and macramé — but something like that. It was a quality I admired.

When Sid visits, I see he's still shlubby, now shaped like a huge matzo ball. He's pretty much like I remember him, though. Balder, perhaps, but who isn't?

He carries a battered knapsack and what looks like a red canvas gym bag. Because my apartment is so small, he has to set these in the bathroom before there is enough space for him to make it to the livingdiningbedroom. I offer him a seat on the bedcouchvisitorschair. He sits down heavily, hands on his knees. His deep-set eyes dart around him.

"Your apartment," he says. "It's like living in a thrift store."

I smile.

He looks at a metal colored-boy bank I have next to my TV. Then he looks at the Uncle Ben's cap on the big Munch-*Scream* blow-up doll. "I notice you've got a lot of..."

"Yes," I tell him. "I collect Negroes."

He nods.

"I need my red bag," he says. "I want to give you something."

I get it for him. He takes out a couple CDs and hands them to me. "Some of my poetry," he says, "I hope you like it."

Then strange sounds begin to come from him. Deep sounds, almost electronic, coming from his face somehow.

OoooWWWWAAAAAAAAAAA. ooooWWWWAAAAAAAAAAA. ooooWWWWAAAAAAAAAAA.

It sounds like Tuvan throat-singing, but I never heard a white guy—let along a Jewish poet from Chicago—who could do it.

"I've been studying Tuvan throat-singing," says Sid. "I entertained the guys on the bus back from the airport."

Imagine riding cooped up in a bus after a long flight from Des Moines. Your first trip to New York. You're already afraid of muggers and Osama. Suddenly your fellow passenger starts sounding like a science fiction movie. I'd bolt. Go right back home.

"What did the guys on the bus say?" I ask.

"They didn't say anything," answers Sid. "It was like they were scared or something."

Sid spies my twin computers. "Do my mind if I use one of your computers to check my email?" he asks. "I've got these two girls chasing after me. One from Russia and one from Malaysia. I think they really love me."

Eagerly, he checks his hotmail account. Smiling and clicking his tongue.

"They can't get enough of me," he says to himself or me. I can't tell which.

Tomorrow Sid reads his poetry at The Bowery Poetry Club. He tells me he's scheduled for two but probably won't start till much later. He's going to throat sing as well as read poetry for the masses. That I've got to see.

I show up at 3:30, but I'm too late.

"I'm sorry I missed it," I tell him. Actually, I *am* sorry I missed it. The absolute natural weirdness of the guy is beginning to intrigue me. He has such a pure oddity about him. The kind of weirdness others spend a lifetime consciously crafting. I haven't seen anything like it since Jim Skafish (also from Chicago) played at CBGBs—except maybe for the inter-sexers who recently slept on the same couch as Sid now sleeps.

The next day I go off to work, teaching Japanese businessmen how to act as obnoxiously as Americans. Sid goes off on his own to explore the city. He gets back to my apartment about an hour after I do.

"I was in the subway today," Sid says. "And I saw this Chinese guy playing some weird instruments. Something like a guitar with a horse's head. I just watched a bit, then I joined him with throat singing. He didn't say anything. He just shrugged and went on. Other people on the platform didn't seem to like it though."

"Dija get any money?" I ask him.

He continues as if my question wasn't meant in sincerity. It wasn't.

"I'm meeting a friend tomorrow," he tells me. "He's a really tall guy... and he looks like Howard Stern."

"Is he a poet too?" I ask.

"Oh no," says Sid. "He's a comedian. He does Howard Stern impersonations."

Then he stops and jumps. Just a small jump, but given his girth, the jump ripples through his body like shockwaves ripple through the air in front of a crashing 747.

"I want to take up tap-dancing," says Sid. "I want to learn to do this right."

"Maybe you could tap dance and throat sing at the same time," I joke.

"That's the idea," he doesn't joke. "I want to be able to do them both together. It would be great to be skilled that way."

I'm not working tomorrow, but I can't sleep late either. The doorbell rings at 10 AM. I climb down from my loft and put on my pants. Sid is already dressed, trying to figure out how to use the intercom/doorbell.

I push the right buttons, opening the door and watching as the elevator comes up to my floor.

Out of the elevator comes Howard Stern. Well, a younger, much taller, Howard Stern, with even longer hair. He shakes my hand.

"Hi," he says, "nice to meet you. I guess everyone tells you this, but I gotta say it. I don't always agree with what you write."

"Nope," I tell him, keeping as straight a face as I can. "No one has ever said that to me before. And, by the way, could you help me get my air conditioner out of the wall? It's really high and its 28 years old."

The guy nods and comes into my apartment, nearly hitting his head on everything. The two of us struggle with the air conditioner for 15 minutes. Nothing happens. After 28 years, it's not about to give up its position to Howard Stern.

I thank him for his efforts though, and Howard and Sid go off to explore Times Square. From here things are uneventful, or at least unimportant. So let's flash out and into mind-land.

During the sixties, hippies, yippies, druggies, and drop-outs—those who chose a tributary off the mainstream—called themselves *freaks*. It was a badge of distinction, warn proudly by the long-haired culture rebels whose non-conformity wound up as conformist as any modern day Republican or vegetarian.

Few people use the word *freak* any more. These days advertisers use catch phrases like *uniquely you* or *made to suit the rebel in you* or something equally stupid. Everyone sees herself as unique... a kind of freak, different from everyone else.

You too, I bet. You're not like *them*, right? Yeah, right. You're as freaky as Ashton Kutcher. You can slip in an out of freakdom as easily as changing t-shirts.

Excuse me while I open a Brooklyn Lager and toast it to Sid, to Paul, to Gloria, to the guy who looks like Howard Stern. These are the real freaks. The ones who thrive in their freakdom without ever seeing it as freaky. The hermaphrodite who farts in the night, or the shlub who throat sings on a subway platform without the slightest intention of being weird.

This brew's for those who live inside of freakdom without showing it off. For those who can't switch back and forth from freak to non-freak because their bodies or brains don't work that way.

Give me your strange, your odd, your hungry freaks, yearning to breathe free. Give me your cast-offs, your poets and tap-dancing throat singers. The wretched refuse of a homogenous society. Send me these insecure, human, social misfits. My couch is yours, and I lift my beercan beside my open door. L'chiam!

ENDNOTES: [*Visitors to my website: mykelboard.com or subscribers (email to: god@mykelboard.com) will receive a few extra endnotes. There are just too many to keep up with.*]

—>*Your tax dollars at work dept:*

This from an internet personal security site:

Computer-security flaws at the IRS expose millions of taxpayers to potential identity theft or illegal police snooping, according to a recent congressional report.

The Internal Revenue Service also can't tell if outsiders are browsing through your tax returns, because it doesn't check its computer systems for unauthorized use. These findings were made public by the Government Accountability Office found.

I say, *Government Accountability Office*??? Whoever heard of such an agency? I can't imagine them surviving the next round of tax cuts.

Who cares about flaccid? dept:

Kesha sent me this from Reuters/ MSNBC:

A group of scientists in Hong Kong spent five months measuring 148 ethnic Chinese volunteers. The average length of their flaccid penises was 8.46 centimeters (3.4 inches), which compared favorably with similar studies on other men overseas.

Germans have average lengths of about 8.6 centimeters, Israelis 8.3, Turks 7.8 and Filipinos 7.35. Italians were the longest at 9 centimeters and Americans averaged 8.8. The scientists did not measure the penises when they were erect.

The study also found that a man's height bore no relation to the length of his member. However, those with higher body mass indexes, or fat content, appeared to have shorter penises.

Whoops dept: Tom Yohannon, brother of God, emailed me that I erred when I said that Turkey had proposed a law decriminalizing adultery. He was right. Mia culpa. (Or culpa of wherever I read it.)

The proposed law would have *criminalized* adultery, making it a jailable offence. As it turns out, the law was never passed. Instead, Turkey adopted more modern laws of oppression and discrimination: jail terms for intergenerational sex, for example. And a new "anti-obscenity" law. Soon there'll be no place to go. *Everywhere* will be America.

In case you're not watching dept: The National Coalition Against Censorship (www.ncac.org) reports on a PBS show "Postcards from Buster." In that show, a little animated rabbit travels around the country to see how different children live. In one of the early episodes, Buster learns about maple syrup and dairy farming from some kids in Vermont. The kids live with two women.

Margaret Spellings, the US Secretary of Education complained. She said "parents would not want their young children exposed to the lifestyles portrayed in the episode." Bravely standing up for free speech, PBS pulled the plug on the show.

Free speech for me, but not for thee, dept: The "Holocaust Survivors Association" includes Jerrold Nadler, my local congressman, along with other big names, most with very Jewish-sounding names. They don't have a website, but they do have a phone number: 718-743-6640.

What do they do? Their proudest achievements have been:

1. We stopped the sale of Nazi Newspapers in Manhattan.

2. We stopped the selling of Hitler T-shirts in Times Square.

3. We forced Lyndon LaRouche to leave New York after two demonstrations in front of his office.

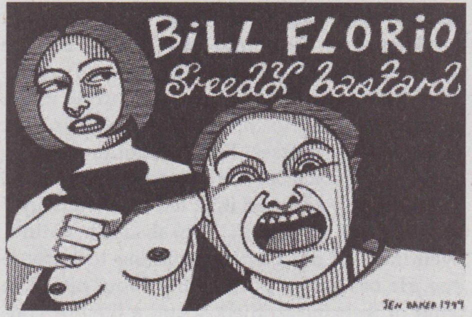
And, oh yeah,

4. We work for human rights and social justice.

Errrr... isn't free speech a human right? Maybe that one doesn't count.

Jew of the Month: With all the bad free speech stuff going on, it's my pleasure to announce this month's Jew of the Month. She is Nadine Strossen, president of the New York branch of the ACLU.

They're not *always* right. And lately they've been focusing more on "equality" than free speech. Still the ACLU's the best we have... and a good chunk of that is due to Nadine.



I've been noticing lately that we don't have enough names to call people, there's this whole cliché of people saying, "Oh, I don't like to be labeled, I'm an individual person..." but, ya know what, that's a load of crap. There are plenty of labels I don't mind having attached to me, but some of them are vague and have too many meanings.

Take "Scenester." Now this has a complete split meaning. See, a long time ago punk rock wasn't really all that cool. Nowadays people think of a scenester as someone like Vince Vaughn in *Swingers*. He shows up, women want him and men want to be him or something like that, but it's all surface and really when you get to the end of the film you realize that he's completely worthless as a real human being. Now if we didn't have so many people dressing up like that to go to a dirty ass punk rock show, there wouldn't be this confusion. From here on in let's call this type a sleezester.

To me a scenester is someone who contributes something more than being someone for me to make fun of, like if you do a zine or take photos, or play in a band, work the door, run the PA, fix guitars... I mean in NYC this guy Edgar just gets drunk and passes out into people and I guess he's contributing in some way. (Well, sometimes he passes out on stage and people take photos with him while a band is playing.) But, yeah, when you're a scenester people know who you are because you have been more than just a spectator. You're putting out records or doing cover art or making flyers or talking to the cops when they show up trying to shut the show down. So maybe we need a new word for this.

The other negative meaning for scenester is someone who really does almost nothing but kiss actual scenesters' asses. Now, I don't know why someone would put all this effort into ass-kissing. Maybe being seen around people who do things to makes them feel more productive. I'm sure low-self esteem plays a good part here. Anyhow ass-kissing seems like just as much work as making yourself useful; I mean to put a lot of time and effort into making yourself useless its pretty damn stupid, and sooner or later someone is gonna use you to their advantage.

(This is the part where you can start getting angry.)

This is where the "punk rock" pornographer comes into the picture.

Unfortunately, when you talk about something like this, 99% of it is directed at women. And a lot of the women it's directed at probably already have a whole lot of issues. We're bound to get some major confusion and anger going. So let's just state the obvious and get it out of the way: Taking your clothes off for money or to fill some void in your own self-image is taking your clothes off; it's not really contributing to the punk scene, even if the website has the word punk in it (or if it is implied). Just because the guy taking the photos has a Black Flag tattoo, doesn't make him less of an exploitationist.

Now I'm sure there is a large set of parallel reasons for you to be into punk and be a wanna-be bottom-of-the-digital-barrel pornstar, but there are a lot of reasons people hurt themselves, hurt others, join military, convents, cults... just having the motivating factors doesn't in itself make you punk, never mind a punk rock scenester. So that leaves you back at Vince Vaughn—you're all dressed up with nothing to show for it. All you've got is your unoriginal chest tattoo and close-ups of your vag just as easily downloaded for free as an unreleased NOFX CD. Yeah, some of the people I'm talking about are actually professional sexworkers /strippers/dominatixes and they will actually gain business from being on these sites—and that's all fine and good—most likely they've figured out this profession works for them. But the 18-year-old who feels that she can't get a date—and a lot of times hasn't really figured out what good music is, never mind the possible stigma of their $200 porn session forever haunting them when they finally grow up—it just bugs me. Now in a perfect vacuum of PC liberalism, this kind of thing is pretty damn OK, but we all know that the vacuum doesn't exist for those who actually leave their house more than once a month to restock the freezer with hot pockets. (Who the fuck eats that's shit anyhow?) You're forever gonna just be known as the chick with the hairy mole or the banana boobs and unless you can keep yourself either completely stoned or completely naïve, you're gonna find some new scene that doesn't know who you are at all.

My conclusion is that this is the Internet age; ten years ago these people would have done their tiny sized riot grrrl zine, printed 40 copies of it and then introduced themselves as feminist publishers. Now you can snap 30 photos of your flabby ass, never leave your parents house and call yourself a scenester. Sorry, the bad four pages of poetry and the Bikini Kill photo was better.

bill@candids.com

AL QUINT

Having just wrapped up the review section for this column, I now have the radio on, tuned to the local sports station. I was all set to tear apart wackjob fundamentalist Pat Robertson for saying that Muslims shouldn't be judges and for his sickening comments on ABC's *This Week with George Stephanopoulos* where he said, in essence, liberal judges were more of a threat to America than "a few bearded terrorists who fly into buildings." Just the latest shocker in a long history of demagoguery from this fringe character who still gets a lot more mainstream media exposure than he should. His words speak volumes and it's frightening that he still has any sort of following.

So that's what I was planning on writing about but what more needs to be said, really? It gets exhausting and seems like screaming at a wall, to be honest. Robertson will be back on the chat shows and this episode will probably pass from the public consciousness until he says something else that's equally crazy. Anyway, I'm half-listening to the radio and they had an ad for the upcoming John Fogerty/John Mellencamp concert at the corporate rock shed in the sticks—it used to be called Great Woods but is now named after a stereo chain. As with many of these "shed" venues, there are plenty of boomer-friendly acts playing there. The oldies or nostalgia circuit.

There's a snippet of "Fortunate Son" that plays in the ad. It's not the classic CCR version but a newer rendition by Fogerty. The grit and anger in his voice is long gone. It sounds tame. No intensity. It sounds as though he's trying to summon the Fogerty of old but it's not quite happening. But I'm sure it'll be crowd-pleasing, anyway. I can see the middle-aged patrons (and, yes, I know I'm also middle-aged) in their hideous patterned shirts covering their paunches (I have one of those too!) swaying and singing along, before getting in their SUVs with the yellow ribbons and heading back to their homes in the 'burbs.

When that song came out in 1969, it sounded ferocious, especially to this 9-year-old kid who had just started listening to the radio a lot more. It was a song I always looked forward to hearing. I didn't get the record for a few more years—it was a kind of beat-up copy I got at a thrift store, but it remains in my collection. That sturdy bass line, steady drum beat, the spare guitar riff and then Fogerty's gem of a voice. Vic Bondi from Articles of Faith called it "the voice of American rock and roll," if memory serves me correctly. Snarly, angry, cantankerous. This wasn't hippie pie-in-the-sky. Fogerty was from more of a working class background and this was song was about how people of his background got the short end of the stick. These were the kids getting sent off to fight that terrible conflict in Vietnam. "Fortunate Son" and the Bob Seger System's "2+2=?" are my two favorite war-themed songs from back then. No flower-power, just pure rock 'n' roll. I didn't know that much about the horrors of war at that age. A few years later, when I was 11 or 12, I became more aware of the horrors of what was going on over there and had fears that it'd still be going on when I turned 18, and I had a pretty good idea I wanted nothing to do with it.

Getting back to "Fortunate Son," though, it's been stripped of its meaning, hasn't it? It's not just that the new version sounds so weak. The original version was used in a commercial and I'm purposely forgetting the product but I think it was for jeans. You know, the clothing of choice for the counterculture. The commercial included the line "some folks are born made to wave the flag/ooh, they're red, white and blue" as there's an image of a flag waving. Not so surprisingly, in this commercial, the next line of the song is omitted: "and when the band plays "Hail To The Chief," oh, they point the cannon at you, Lord." I know Fogerty probably had nothing to do with the placement of his song in this ad since he lost the rights to his back catalog years ago and, in fact, wouldn't perform any Creedence songs for a long time. Still, if someone's exposure to that song is only through the jeans commercial, they probably think it's just a song about being a good flag-waving American. They don't have the context. Something's wrong about that. I could go off on a tirade about how a lot of songs I loved as a kid and teenager have been bastardized in this way but I don't have the space.

So Fogerty and Mellencamp are on the nostalgia circuit. I just saw MDC play two nights in a row, with the original lineup—Dave Dictor, Mikey "Offender" Donaldson (one of the best bass players in hardcore), Ron Posner, and even Al Schvitz. It was a bit loose at times but I'm not averse to a trip down memory lane and those songs still have meaning to me. They played well and they were playing DIY venues, touring around in a van and a trailer. No rock star trips. Doing it because they still want to, I imagine. It seems genuine and still heartfelt.

The songs on *Millions of Dead Cops* forever corrupted my thinking. At the shows, Dave talked about punk being a music for the freaks. I may not look like a freak on the outside, having never really gone in for punk fashion, except for wearing band shirts and some buttons on my jacket, but I always felt like one on the inside. A misfit. An outsider. "Business on Parade," "America's So Straight," "Church and State" and "Born To Die" Those hit me goddamned fucking hard as I played a tape of the album while commuting to a much-despised job in 1982.

The thing is, unlike the probable audience for the Fogerty/Mellencamp show, the audiences in Cambridge and Haverhill, Mass were mostly made up of people who were born after the first MDC album came out. I don't know if that's the case elsewhere, but it was true around here. It made me wistful, in a way, because I wonder what happened to all those people I used to see in the 80s. There were a few older faces at both shows but it was a vast minority. In Cambridge, Dave put his arm around my shoulder and pointed out to the youthful gathering that I was probably the only person there who saw them in '82. I'd guess that's also true for their 1983 Rock Against Reagan show. But we're both still here. I'll leave it to others to decide if that's cool or pathetic. I'm kind of happy about it, myself.

*****

Lots of reviews this month... let's get to 'em...

AMATEUR PARTY – *Sounds and Halls to House Them* (Cheap Art/Golden Brown, CD-EP)

A couple of people from KILL THE MAN WHO QUESTIONS (Mike McKee and Andrew Martini) are in this new 3-piece from Philadelphia and it's a departure from what they've done before. Musically, that is—while some of the lyrics are more personalized, they don't shy from larger concerns, such as militarism or nationalism. Angular, accessible post-punk that has some similarities to older Fugazi and other iconic bands. Subtle guitar shadings that encompass melody, slash and a little dub, accompanied by pulsating bass and drums and heartfelt vocals. The instrumentation doesn't get in the way of the song, itself. A strong debut. (PO Box 2101, Philadelphia, PA 19103, www.cheap-art.com)

BORN/DEAD (Prank, 12" EP)

Limited edition self-titled EP for Born/Dead's recent US tour—five more songs of intense hardcore with a bit more complexity on a few of 'em—slower, brooding passages, even piano closing out the last song, "Comfort In Ignorance." "Fear" and "Democracy" keep the rage factor high, after the somewhat uneven leadoff song "Repetition." Didn't quite have the immediacy of their other records but it's still worth hearing. (PO Box 410892, SF, CA 94141-0892, www.prankrecords.com)

CIDER – *They Are the Enemy* (Painkiller, 7" EP)

British from Cleveland, huh? And, somewhere along the way, the phony British accents turn into redneck accents. Anyway, whoever they are (and I have a pretty good idea who they are), this is primo Clevo punk. Raw, loud, fast—a wanton, fuzzed-out sound with guitar and bass merged into a molten sheet of sound and played at a breakneck pace. Already out of print, apparently, but some distros may have it. I'd urge you to track it down. (8 Burney St. #1, Boston, MA 02120, www.painkillerrecords.com)

CLUSTERFUCK – *Midlife Crisis* (Winter-mute, 7" EP)

Midlife crisis? I can relate big time! Anyway, a few of these people used to be in SEIZURE way back when and it's got an older hardcore sound with a few distinguishing characteristics—the main one is Donn's crooning, yet snotty vocals and there's also a tuneful undercurrent to go with the aggression. Smart/clever/sarcastic lyrics, as well and, if there's a running theme, the song called "Humans Disappoint Me" kind of sums it up. Thirteen songs and not one throwaway. (38 Wall St., Valhalla, NY 10595, clusterfuck.cjb.net)

EARACHES – *Get the Revolution Out of Your Head* (Steel Cage, CD)

Even better than the last album. Good 'ol garage rock 'n' roll. Bellicosely drawled vocals and a two-fisted sound that's both catchy and loud. "Fake Radio" is an anthem for those of us who crave real radio and "Get the Revolution Out of Your Head" and "Surveillance" are anthems for those who crave not to be pushed around by the motherfucking man—the dedication on the sleeve is "to freedom of expression for all individuals everywhere." After reading that right-wing asshole Jeff Jacoby in the Boston Globe and his comments defending the PATRIOT act, this is the perfect antidote. Keep rocking, keep fighting! (PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125, www.steelcagerecords.com)

GIANT HAYSTACKS – *Blunt Instrument* (Mistake, LP)

Blunt and brilliant. The influences aren't tough to figure out—a lot of Minutemen and Gang of Four, and this Bay Area three-piece also bring back memories of the Boston art-punk Propeller collective of the early 80s and Mission of Burma—they would have fit in well with that whole thing. But this is the present and, even with the stylistic specter, Giant Haystacks' songs are fresh-sounding and attention-grabbing. Jabbing, jagged guitar lines playing off killer bass-lines and executed with precision. Observational lyrics that personalize wider issues—on "Life Goes On," the point is made that you can see the atrocities of war on TV and then shut it off and it goes away because, hey, it's far away. An excellent follow-up to their last album, *We Are Being Observed.* (PO Box 22971, Oakland, CA 94609, www.gianthaystacks.com)

MIND ERASER – *Cave* (Painkiller/ Col-lapse, LP)

Punishing and brutalizing hardcore by this Boston band. Justin DeTore has played drums for a number of bands, including Mental, Righteous Jams, Stop and Think and Shot Dead, to name a few and he's the vocalist in this band. Here, he teams up with Chris Corry from Stop and Think and they play all the instruments on the record (the band now includes Chris Minicucci and Brendan). The sound varies between slow, heavy crush and blinding bursts of speed. Justin howls with malevolent rage and the intensity never flags. Lyrical themes look inward—kind of a primal scream therapy for casting out the demons. "What Did I Do," "Subtle Entities" and "You Weren't Right" all blaze with speedy aggression. (8 Burney St. #1, Boston, MA 02120, www.painkillerrecords.com)

SECRET SEVEN/FPO-Split (Moo Cow, 7" EP)

Singapore/Macedonia hardcore unity! Two bands from far-flung parts of the globe each ripping out some energetic music. Secret Seven have a rip-roaring old-school sound, sometimes revving it up to double-speed but without losing the tightness. FPO play mainly at warp speed and the songs aren't quite as memorable, although their Unity/Los Crudos medley (?!) fares better. (38 Larch Circle, Belmont, MA 02478, www.moocowrecords.com)

THE SHINING (Pick Up, 7" EP)

Blistering hardcore/thrash/crossover. Rabid vocals, flailing riffage, and it's catchy to boot. Working the same terrain as Municipal Waste, although with a bit more seriousness in the message and delivery—on the first track, "A Song for the Rest of the World... Except You of Course," vocalist Robert Nijhout announces he's "pissed off at the world." That's not to say it's a grim affair at all—when those powerchords kick in, I'm smiling ear to ear. Hell yeah. (Rogier Heumakers, Fredriksstraat 3, 1 hoog, 1054 LA Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS. (www.drink.to/theshining)

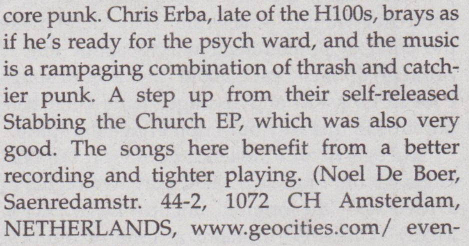
THUMBS UP – *We're All Fucked* (Room 13, 7" EP)

The latest from Thumbs Up—this Philly hardcore band blends bruising speed (occasionally going into DRI-ish territory) with a bit of guitar chug without devolving into lunk-core. 7 originals plus a cover of the PIST's "The Customer Is Always Right" and raging full on. (www.room13 records.com)

UPSTAB (Way Back When/Even Worse, 7" EP)

Second 7" for UPSTAB, who are from Cleveland, and it's a wild dose of nutzoid hardcore punk. Chris Erba, late of the H100s, brays as if he's ready for the psych ward, and the music is a rampaging combination of thrash and catchier punk. A step up from their self-released Stabbing the Church EP, which was also very good. The songs here benefit from a better recording and tighter playing. (Noel De Boer, Saenredamstr. 44-2, 1072 CH Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS, www.geocities.com/ evenworserecords)

Al Quint, PO Box 2746, Lynn, MA 01903
email: suburbanvoice@earthlink. net.
Sonic Overload radio:
www. sonicoverload.moocowrecords.com



I think it's interesting how mainstream ideals can creep into the brains of those of us who generally live outside and on the fringe. For all of our underground community, radical politics, and living an alternative existence, sometimes it is actually pretty startling how much our upbringing, our family, our culture, our society at large, and the overwhelming influence of mass media can affect our subconscious. Right now what I'm thinking about in particular is body image. Our society ultimately gives us the message that thin is better. Thin is in, thin is healthy, and if we actually look at the images of women shown to us in magazines and on television then the message we're getting is actually that anorexia is what we should strive for.

I think about this topic a lot, in fact a lot more than I would like to. For as long as I can remember I've been somewhat obsessed with my weight. I still don't really know where I got this concern. My mother didn't pass it on to me, so I have to assume that I picked it up from my peers at school, from magazines I read as a pre-teen, from our society at large, and all the messages that subconsciously got shoved down my throat before I was even age ten. I have known people with eating disorders, and while I've never been diagnosed with such a thing nor come close to having a disorder in this regard, I definitely recognize that I have an obsession. Consequently, like many tweaky things in my obsessive brain, I can relate to many things about eating disorders without actually being in disorder myself. And it is because of that awareness that I spend a lot of time pondering the subject.

I know that it's common in alternative/ activist/punk circles to be supportive of individual people's differences to the point where size, ability, and appearance are not things that we should judge people by, nor should we apply standards, limitations, or acceptance based upon them. And while all this sounds good—and while zines that are about embracing yourself, loving yourself, and being yourself are awesome—I think that sometimes our ideals and our practice don't quite meet at the same dead-end. Are we accepting of people of all sizes and body types, or do we, even if subconsciously, have a hierarchy based on appearance? And if not just based on size, health, and body type, then do we conform to a hierarchy based on fashion, trendiness and overall appearance and the ability to fit in or be ahead of the trends? I think that, even when we think we are beyond these things, many of us succumb to these practices and expectations more than we'd like to admit. For all of our shirking of the standards of society and the mainstream, in many ways our punk subculture is really just a microcosm of the same.

But say that we do live in an idealistic punk subculture where we are able to embrace body types, gender identity, and revel in our uniqueness. Why is it then that so many of us are still plagued with this desire to be thin, to lose weight, to be something that we are not? And why is it that we are also somehow afraid to even talk about it? Is it because a part of us knows it is fucked up, stupid, wrong or just plain silly to be aspiring to be something we are not, or in some cases can not ever be? Is it because we know it doesn't make any sense to aspire towards these artificial and meaningless goals in the first place?

Now of course this is a loaded subject with many many directions to go in. There are people with serious weight issues that are a health risk, and there are thin people who think they have a weight problem. But at the same time if both of these extreme mindsets lead to mental anguish and losing sanity and happiness while obsessing on this issue, then it's still manages to be a problem even if totally different extremes. Whenever I get to talking about being "fat," I get eyes rolled at me, or some such thing. And isn't that what we're "supposed to do" when someone says they're "fat"—tell them they are not? But the thing is, to me it doesn't much matter if I am fat or not fat—if I *feel* fat then I feel crappy, and my self-image and confidence goes down. Feel, is the key word here for me. If I feel fat then my comfort in my own body is at risk and consequently I attempt to make myself feel better. If that means changing the type or size of clothes I'm wearing, or putting more attention on what I'm eating, or focusing more on exercising, then I'll do any and all of these things. And ultimately, because I'm relatively balanced for the most part, I will get my brain in check. But not everyone can. Some people for all of their progressive-mindedness can still have a mental disorder that causes an eating disorder. Perhaps they "should know better," but the same could be said about being depressed—you can rationalize it all you want, and talk yourself out of it all you want, but if you suffer from depression, your brain is tweaking, and rationalizing a tweaking brain is hard. If it was rational, it wouldn't be a disorder.

So I'm talking in circles and I don't know the answers myself, which is why I'm throwing out questions. What I do know is that I've gained weight that I don't like. And I know a lot of other people who share in this. I could theorize that it's a mid-30's metabolism change thing going on, and for some of us (horrors) it might well be. Too many donuts and too much beer? Perhaps. Not enough exercise? Always. Or there is the conspiracy theory that I have dreamed up that it's the additives in our food affecting us. Perhaps there is even something in the soymilk or tofu that is making some of us bloated. There are always food allergies. I love the idea of a conspiracy, and while I do believe that there is something potentially very wrong with food additives and "natural flavoring," and growth hormones and MSG and all the other nasty things that may or may not be in our food supply, at the end of the day I'm not really trying to pass blame. It's easy to do, or to want to do—and there really might be something to it—but I'm well aware that with myself, it starts in my brain.

I've been obsessed with my weight since I was, like, eight years old. I'm extremely conscious of what I eat, though I wouldn't say I've ever dieted per se. I pay attention to the foods that are good for me, and those that are bad, and I try to eat healthful, balanced meals without denying myself the treats and goodies that I want and desire. But the thing that I really question and wonder about is where these ideas come from, cause like I said, my family did not instill an obsession with weight or body size or dieting. And I don't feel like the general lifestyle I live today is confined into the sort of thinking that is perpetuated in the fashion magazines that I don't read or even look at. I'm surrounded by people who are all about being individuals, being natural, being wholesome and down to earth, being true to yourself, and all this sort of liberating and empowering philosophy...so where does this warped sense of body image come from when I don't pay attention to any of the media outlets that constantly try to push this thin agenda? As I said, I have no answers, just loads of questions. But I remember the first time I read a zine written by a female singer in a popular punk band that was all about her battles with her weight, and the internal torment she suffered through, and I remember how much of an impact that had on me. It made me know that I was not alone. We usually aren't, we just don't like to talk about it for fear that we are.

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FELIX HAVOC
FIN DE SIÈCLE ANGST

This is part two of a discussion of punk record collecting in the 21st century. Last column I talked about some basic principles like value, rarity, price, and merit. This time around I'd like to talk about how the Internet has effected record collecting.

Pundits like to say that the spread of information technology has changed everything. In many areas I think the effects of the Internet are overstated, but for record collecting the whole picture has changed in the last decade or so.

I feel that the primary effect the Internet has had on record collecting is the diffusion of knowledge. You can learn as much about hardcore on *Kill from the Heart* in one afternoon as I have from 20 years of reading *MRR* and *Flipside*. There are dozens of websites featuring discographies and information about rare and obscure records. You can download millions of mp3s from a variety of sources. All this was, until recently, the province of a small, elite group of collectors. Most "average" collectors knew only of the rare and obscure from bootlegs, reissues, dub tapes and word of mouth. Today it's possible to see someone wearing a shirt of a band, or hear them mentioned, and in a few hours read their bio, download their discography, and check and recheck pressing info about their releases.

In the last column I talked about the relative ideas of merit and value in record collecting. The diffusion of knowledge on the Internet means that records of merit no longer stay obscure until they are compiled or reissued. There is a wealth of information about almost every punk record ever pressed available at ones fingertips now. This means that the days when a dedicated collector had the chance of rediscovering great records that the contemporary generation was placing no value on are almost over. There is still a chance that a few undiscovered mega rare punk gems exist, but this possibility dwindles all the time. It has become more and more rare to find great records in dollar bins that store owners don't recognize the value of.

The next most important change is the creation of the virtual marketplace for punk records. Most of us grew up with ordering records from set sale lists, *MRR* classifieds and in stores. A very rare record might sit in an out-of-the-way store for years until a buyer came along who was looking for it. Today a store can put a rare record online and make it available to collectors worldwide in an instant. There were auctions in pre-Internet days—some are now legendary, such as the BCT auctions; these dragged on for months of mail and phone bidding. It's funny how antiquated this seems now although it was only a few years ago. Still, access to this marketplace was limited to a die-hard group of collectors. MRR certainly helped promote record collecting as part of its mission from day one. From the cover story in issue 15 to the now classic scumpit articles, to the now barely used classified sections. I have fond memories of Tim's want list ads: "APESHIT ABOUT RECORDS" with lists of impossibly obscure records that no one but he and Kugelberg knew about in those days. The rise of online record selling and trading has made this once-essential clearinghouse for punk collecting only a fond memory.

The rise of the online marketplace and diffusion of knowledge has made collecting punk records more popular than ever. There are many thousands more people today who are fans of, say, Negative Approach and want to buy their 7" than ever bought the 7" or saw the band during their heyday. The Internet has knocked down a lot of the barriers to building a sick record collection. There is now a previously undreamed of access to records and information. At the same time, however, the Internet has erected another set of barriers to aspiring collectors in the form of price inflation.

Price inflation is one of the most discussed aspects of collecting punk records in the past few years and I want to discuss it from several angles. First off, anyone will tell you this is a supply and demand issue. Many more people are competing for a limited supply of rare records than ever before. They aren't making these records any more, yet the fan base and number of collectors continues to grow. At one point in the 90s it seemed like the price of a lot of rare records had sort of leveled off. Then after about 2000 prices started to rocket upwards. The rise of online auction sites made it easier than ever to buy and sell records, and it seems like in the last five years most prices have always gone up and never down. At the same time you hear a lot of collectors complaining about how there are fewer and fewer "scores" to be had. The few independent record stores that have survived into the 21st century are quite savvy and are skimming their rare records to sell online instead of unwittingly pricing them at $4. Old scenesters are less and less likely to sell a collection to a store or to an interested collector for cheap when they can sell them online for top dollar. As time goes by, these traditional sources of records will continue to dry up and most rare records will only be in the hands of collectors. As I mentioned in the last column, this puts a lot of upward pressure on prices as no one is willing to let a record go for less than they paid for it.

Another factor that has really driven prices upwards is what I would like to call the "holy grail" factor. Most collectors have a holy grail record that has eluded them for many years at any price. For me it's currently Rattus's *Khomeni Rock* 7". When a collector's holy grail record comes up for auction they are willing to pay *whatever it takes* to get the record. When the same record is the holy grail of two or more collectors the competition heats up and the price soars. Because one person paid the maximum price for a record once doesn't automatically mean every other copy will sell for that price. But it only takes one person paying the higher price to make other people start to assign a higher value to that record. Collectors start to fetishize these records and in a sort of self-fulfilling process they start to rise in price. A lot of obscure records, if they were priced at $3, would never attract the attention of someone who didn't know the band. But when a record starts selling for several hundred bucks, people start to take notice. And this added interest means the increased demand drives up the price.

Another related factor is that a lot of records turn up only once every few years. If there are ten collectors whose top want only comes up for sale every two or three years this is automatically going to drive up the price. Often at work in the mind of the buyer is something like, "Last time I saw this record for sale it cost half as much, next time I see it for sale it might be twice as much again." I think this is driving up a lot of high-end items with collectors of late. Prices are continually going up, and a lot of people are afraid if they don't buy a record now, no matter how high the price, they'll either never see if for sale again or it will be three times as much later. I know I have recently bought a lot of records that I thought I would eventually find for cheap at far more than I wanted to pay, primarily because I was afraid the next time I saw them offered the price would have doubled again. Records I passed on when they were priced at 15 or 20 dollars are now selling for $75-100, and it's probable that in the not-too-distant future they will be selling for $200-300.

One point I must bring up is that the fan base for hardcore is no longer just people in their teens and twenties. After 20 years of hardcore and close to 30 of punk rock there are many collectors now in their 30s, 40s and even 50s. These people's incomes have risen and the relative price they are willing to pay for a record is much higher than that a younger crowd might pay. That is to say, if you had bought all the Dischord and Touch and Go singles in the 80s for less than $10 each, you wouldn't mind as much paying $200 now to get the last holy grail to complete your collection. A lot of people's tastes increase with their incomes, and for record collectors I think it's more common than not.

A lot of collectors have observed with dismay the fact that a lot of 80s hardcore records that no one cared about for years have sold recently at high collector prices. Ken Sanderson made the observation that a lot of collectors passed on those second and third tier records when they were new. Now looking back they wonder if they missed some rare gem. So the price of third-rate records that were dollar bin staples for many years suddenly rises. The collectors buying these will probably soon realize there was a reason they passed on these records back in the day and they will not hold their value. As I said before, some records have merit and some don't. There are currently a lot of records being sold at high prices that aren't very good, or even very rare. The classics, however, will stay the classics, and I predict that the prices of these will continue to rise.

A good example of this is the Tales of Terror LP. I saw this band once and they were pretty terrible. Their LP was a common sight in the $3-5 range and never seemed to move fast from any record bin it resided in. Then in the last year or two several copies sold at auction for $50-70. The remaining $3-5 copies are being snagged up and put online as we speak. Maybe a few more will sell for these kind of prices, but when people realize this record pretty much sucks, the price will level off or fall. In contrast, Minor Threat's *Filler* EP is not only highly influential but is an insanely hot, paint peeling, fist pumping rager. This record will never go out of style and its price will continue to rise as long as people still collect records.

Indeed, a good place to look to see the future of punk/HC record collecting would be the 60s psych/garage collector scene. Or, looking even further into the future, the 78 RPM blues/R & B collector scene. These should give an idea of what punk collecting will be like in 20 and 40 years. If current trends continue, by the middle of the 21st century a record like Fix's *Vengeance* or the Absentees 7" will sell for five figures.

Quite frequently I hear people saying that prices will come down eventually and that they are currently on a "bubble." While this may be true of a few items, I think overall prices will continue to rise. For every record that sells at $200 there are fifty collectors watching the auction saying, "I would totally have bought that for $50" and those collectors are probably more likely to eventually pay $200 than they are to wait around for the record to drop in price.

So far in my experience, the records sold in online auctions are almost always priced way above actual "market" prices. Usually these represent collectors paying their "holy grail" price as opposed to what the record would sell for if the marketplace was more balanced. The Internet auctions drive up the prices overall. But in my experience online auctions are the worst place to buy rare records. Another thing to think about is that a whole generation has grown up who think that online auctions are the *only* place to find rare records—or any records for that matter—and as this generation ages I think they will contribute to the rise in prices.

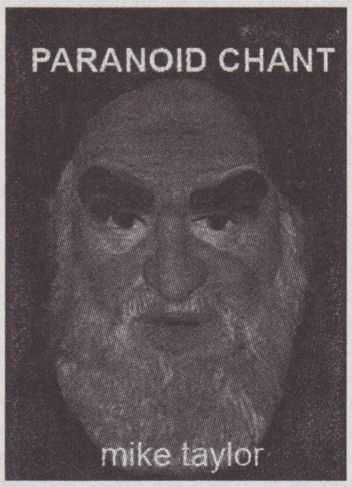
A somewhat less tangible effect of the Internet on record collecting is what cultural-studies-types call the Acceleration of Culture. In a previous column I discussed how the new release window had shrunk from 4-6 months to 4-6 weeks over the past few years. Also, the culture industry seems to manufacture, pump up, and kill trends faster than ever. It seems like all the time a new style is being "revived" or becoming "retro chic" while another becomes passé. Trends rise and fall faster in the information age and short attention spans are quickly diverted or transfixed on the next big thing.

There is a never-ending process in music wherein a brash new style breaks out and gets a lot of attention, the style blows up and becomes quite popular, many imitators jump on the bandwagon to ape the founders of the style, the style becomes decadent and there is a backlash against it. Then years later a new generation looking to break away from the current music scene rediscovers the most essential elements of the old style, assimilates them into a new style, and revives the style. Interestingly, I think this process is manifested most strongly in punk and hardcore. This is one factor responsible for the massive splintering into sub-genres from "Punk" over the years.

Here's a good example: In the late 80s, early 80s hardcore was pretty out of style. Except for Voorhees and a few youth-crew bands almost no one was rocking '82-style hardcore. The big thing at the time was Sub Pop. I was at the used record store every day flipping through the new arrivals as early-80s scenesters sold off their vinyl to either buy CDs or new Sub Pop titles. This was one of the best eras for collecting without a doubt. I remember so many older punks looking at me and saying, "you still listen to this stuff?" Foreign hardcore was especially undervalued in this time period and anyone my age can tell you about loading up on today's highly collectible Italian and Scandinavian hardcore records at 50 cents or a dollar each after distributors like Systematic, Greenworld and Rough Trade dumped their foreign hardcore stock. Now, fifteen years later, early-80s hardcore is more popular than ever and the Sub Pop thing is pretty much forgotten. There is a handful of Sub Pop records that are have stood the test of time and still command respect from collectors. But most of them have fallen into the obscurity of dollar bins and garbage dumps. For all we know, however, a revival of the Sub Pop sound is right around the corner and prices will soar again as the supply of records from that scene has dried up in the intervening period when no one cared about them.

Most record collectors are first and foremost music fans. They appreciate raging records in any genre. The savvy collector and fan picks the best records from each musical scene as it rises and falls. As I mentioned before, an essential trait for building a sick collection is to look where everyone else isn't. When everyone is bidding up the price of Japanese hardcore records it's the best time to start collecting South American punk or digging into Siberian folk music. That is to say, learn to hear the merit in records that are currently undervalued by other collectors. Follow music and your passion, not what people are paying for records. Price doesn't always reflect merit and in an era where trends rise and fall fast, many auction winners are going to find themselves stuck with one-sided live albums limited to 2000 on fluorescent green vinyl that no one is interested in a few years from now.

And for all of those who say stuff like "no one will care about hardcore records in 30 years" I say *bullshit*. Hardcore rules. People were probably saying that about blues in the 30s or surf music in the early 60s but there is still a small but dedicated scene for those and many other types of music, and the records produced by those styles have generated die-hard collector scenes. If *you* don't think you'll be listening to hardcore in 30 years, I pay cash for collections and can be reached at *felix@havocrex.com* when you are ready to sell. Later, dude.



In January's issue of *Harper's* there is a list of questions submitted by Vietnamese people to the US-Indochina Educational Foundation's "FAQ About America," to be later answered by US educators in a book published in Ho Chi Minh City. It is my belief that the children and adult breadwinners of Vietnam deserve a better, more immediate answer to their burning questions. So this month, for the Vietnamese punk and layman alike, I'd like to offer some of my American insight in the interest of making the non-US world a more understanding place; these questions may also be read in English by non-Vietnamese foreign populations.

When did your culture form?

The US culture is constantly evolving; due to swells of immigration and a boisterous array of vibrant youth cultural options, it's nearly impossible to say with certainty what typifies "American" culture. There are, however, values that form the bedrock of more transient elements of our collective consciousness, such as a two-parent family unit, independent of grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins, affordable education, and unlimited social mobility.

What does a typical American look like?

5'10", male, with powdered wig and blue pea coat. In warmer months, this American may wear a short-sleeved, pastel button-down shirt.

What is Hollywood?

Hollywood is a part of Los Angeles, in the state of California. For good reason, Hollywood is often regarded by many Americans as morally debased and image-obsessed. Hollywood derives its name from the Indian state of Bollywood.

There are many sexy scenes in American movies. Does that reflect the daily lives of Americans?

Americans get play, Vietnam. Due to genetically modified produce and Bovine Growth Hormone, Americans are abnormally well endowed and can satisfy their lovers for many hours. That's why so few American business travelers seek out the fleshpots of Southeast Asia while there on business.

How many people in the USA like to drink Coke?

Coke enjoys an expansive market of healthy, athletic Americans who express their freedoms of purchase at gas stations and malls.

Why are American presidents so bellicose?

American presidents are sworn to celibacy in a secret underground ceremony directly following their televised inaugurations.

Does the US really wish for peace and happiness for other countries, as they always announce?

Are you calling us liars? Like Vietnam is gonna call us liars. Whatever.

What do Americans think about Communists?

We believe in Communism as we encourage our children to believe in Santa Claus or the Tooth Fairy. It's a comfort that must be outgrown in order to engage in the practicalities of modern life.

People say that Americans look down on people of color and people of third world countries. Is this true?

That's simply not true. America itself is comprised of dozens of tiny third world countries which combine to form a massive market-based democratic Voltron. America respects its athletes immensely and would never endanger our position in the Olympics.

Why do many Americans like to be single nowadays?

The popularity of standup comedy in the USA has engrained in our culture the fear of ex-wives and in-laws. Plus, we're all in rock bands that spend eight months out of the year on tour, so what are you gonna do with a family, right?

Do you think using an excessive amount of slang will gradually destroy the beauty of the English language?

American English varies with popular usage. Most Americans who were born and raised in our schools couldn't string together a proper sentence if their entrance exams depended on it. It's just part of our charm. And we insist that all partially articulate communications be conducted in English when you come visit, FYI.

What will happen if the American president doesn't carry out the promises he made in the campaign?

He will be ridiculed in the popular media.

How can the post-traumatic stress disorder be solved? What are the US responsibilities in solving it?

We strive for the least trauma possible in this country. We do, however, stick to our credo: A job's a job.

Why does America appear to be a major factor of almost every war?

That's like asking why take the muffins out of the oven once the kitchen smells chocolaty, or why the sky is round. This kind of naivety is difficult to deal with.

Which aspects of life are American people most interested in?

Americans pursue fulfilling relationships with people in magazines, poetic and politically astute works of fiction, sensible dinners, and hot lesbo action. It's these small things that really make life worth living, isn't it?

I have learned America is a free country; what is the real freedom in this country?

We've secured a representative democracy that is the envy of the world as well as effectively shaken the yolk of oppressive religions. I assume you've heard of THE CONSTITUTION?

I hope that clears some things up, guys.

Drop a line: PO BOX 28226, Providence, RI 02908

MORE THAN FASHION
CARL CORDOVA

When I look back over the last two months, it's hard to believe how many places I've been. Since writing my last column, I have been to the Midwest to see INTEGRITY and Chicago Fest, did one last tour of California with OUR TURN, and traveled all over Western Europe. Unfortunately, I won't be able to touch on all of these places this month, but the following is a synopsis of where I went, and the great bands I got to see. I believe my last column concluded with me and my roommate leaving for the Midwest, so it only makes sense that this is where we should begin.

Midwest Spring Break 2005: The Aftermath.

Keep in mind that when one flies to Cincinnati, Ohio, in reality they are flying into Kentucky — about ten miles south of Cincinnati. That's why it's called the Greater Cincinnati Airport. Some would say that Cincinnati might as well be in Kentucky, and while I might tend to agree with them, this point adds nothing to my story. You must pass through this small city called Covington before crossing over the Ohio River into Cincinnati. In Covington, there is an awesome hole-in-the-wall diner called The Anchor. It is here where had our first meal of the journey. A variety of sailing and sea-related knick-knacks adorned the interior, and there was this old jukebox with a puppet big band from the 50s that lit up and moved anytime someone inserted a coin. It is worth the trip alone. Plus, you can't beat a grilled cheese on wonder bread (with fries!) for $2.00 — even if the entire restaurant is the smoking section.

"Way back, when we were good friends/I thought that it would never end." - Way Back by ENDPOINT.

The first leg of our Cincinnati trip was good times. I got to hang out with some of my good friends from the early days when I was just getting into hardcore—the days when we were fifteen and thought ENDPOINT ruled the earth (years later I would come to realize that ENDPOINT hardly even ruled the Tri-state area). Meeting these friends at a bar, and sitting around a table watching them drink beer was a bizarre experience for me (especially when my drunk ex-girlfriend tried hitting on my roommate). Some at the table were old band mates from my first straight edge band, while others were just kids that I went with to hardcore and punk shows. Watching them drinking and telling stories about their adult lives made me feel a little out of touch. I felt like the hopeless romantic at the table, clutching onto a subculture that is so obviously dysfunctional, while they had let it go years ago. Did they recognize it's dysfunction early on, or did it not have the same lasting effect that it has had on my life? Did they think it was funny when I started talking about *MRR*, or the new bands that I was into? As I get older, this experience happens more and more with new generations of friends. For the lack of a better word, my visit to Cincinnati was a very sobering experience. Even though I am only 27, I would be lying if I didn't feel a least a little proud that I've kept this up as long as I have, especially when everyone sitting around the table that night had at one time or another said that *this was forever*.

Saturday morning we took off for Cleveland for the INTEGRITY and APARTMENT 213 show at Peabody's. Our experiences that night in Cleveland could take up the rest of this column, so I will just touch on some brief personal show highlights. They included: bumping into the singer for FUCKED UP and his fiancé, spotting a kid with a homemade Sharpie shirt that said "I FUCK LIKE RETARDS DANCE," laughing at the drunk guy in a G-Unit basketball jersey who looked like the EMINEM version of Side Show Bob, only to find out later that he was the guitarist for INTEGRITY, someone heckling this same guitarist on stage for looking like an "out of shape version of Blaze," the old metal head in the pit that went by the name of "Mosh Tongue," and me stage diving to "Vocal Test/Hollow." Of course, getting to interview Dwid was an experience onto itself (which can be read in its entirety below).

After spending the night in Cleveland with a great guy named Jeff Hess, we made our way through Indiana (quite possibly the most boring state you can drive through). Britton and I made pretty good time, as we were able to make it to Chicago Fest in about four plus hours. Unfortunately, we missed THE FIRST STEP since they decided to go on third instead of third-to-last like they were listed on the flyer. No sooner than we arrived, they were already taking off. Luckily, we were able to chat for a few minutes, score some sweet TFS concert memorabilia, and meet the new bass recruit before they left for home. I wasn't that bummed, because I knew THE FIRST STEP would be flying out for the last three OUR TURN shows a couple weeks later. The highlights of the Chicago Fest that Sunday included: PUNCH IN THE FACE (especially their new material), SIN ORDEN, and DIRECT CONTROL. These bands more than made up for the fact that we missed our friends play.

Unfortunately, my column's space is limited, so I will have to cover the last OUR TURN tour and my trip to Europe in a future column. Please send all hate mail, grammar suggestions, and INMATES 7"s to: *Carl Cordova, 746 Baker Street, San Francisco, CA 94115. ih8thekids@gmail.com.*

Sitting Down with Dwid

The interview below is like any INTEGRITY interview you'll read with Dwid, where the lines of fact and fiction are purposely blurred (by him, not me) to make the story more extraordinary. From his revisionist claims that from the start INTEGRITY had been influenced by bands like GISM and DISCHARGE, to the German guy sitting next him during the interview that he claimed was his on-tour psychiatrist. All in all, I wanted to know if he ever regretted the fact that all the controversy and self-perpetuated drama surrounding INTEGRITY ended up hurting the band's success in the long run. Towards the end of the interview, I began to realize that he really just doesn't give a fuck. Seriously.

***

Carl: So what are you doing with your life now that INTEGRITY has once again called it quits?

Dwid: I live in Ghent, Belgium, which is somewhat outside of Brussels, and I produce videos for bands that would otherwise not be able to afford to do them on their own.

Carl: Like video editing?

Dwid: The whole production. Filming, editing, everything. I am like the Roger Corman of low-end video production.

Carl: Are you living in Belgium legally?

Dwid: Illegally. Well, should I say that in print?

Carl: I highly doubt their immigration officers read *MRR*.

Dwid: No, I live there legally. I still use my social security number. You would be surprised how the internet allows you to do things that you normally couldn't do otherwise. Getting paid through the internet means that I am working from the US.

Carl: Really? I wasn't aware that it worked like that.

Dwid: Oh yeah, definitely. Right now as an American, what I do or don't do isn't strictly observed over there. Now that might change depending on the political climate.

Carl: How long has INTEGRITY been around, including all its different incarnations?

Dwid: It started in 1988. You caught me at a bad time for math. 13 or 15 years maybe?

Carl: 18 years.

Dwid: 18 years? Jesus…

Carl: Why get back together for one show at Peabody's?

Dwid: We really weren't getting back together. A lot of my life has been spent here in Cleveland, and this is my friends club. They wanted to celebrate the club's existence for however many years they've been around, and since we are the oldest band that has ever played here, when they asked us to play, we said yes. It wasn't supposed to be a big deal, just a local Cleveland show with local bands. Some kids got wind of it on the internet, and came here from out of state.

Carl: Yeah, I came from San Francisco.

Dwid: Really?

Carl: It coincided with Easter, and my dad lives in Cincinnati.

Dwid: Oh, good. I hope you didn't come here just for us. Actually, the best show we ever played in Cleveland was on Palm Sunday, and today was the closest they could squeeze in to commemorate that date, and also celebrate the club's existence. Peabody's has always been generous to the smaller bands out there.

Carl: So how old are you now?

Dwid: 34

German guy: 38

Dwid: Don't listen to my asshole psychiatrist. He thinks I'm older.

Carl: Why keep doing this? What keeps you motivated and involved?

Dwid: One thing that I have always been criticized and crucified for is not making records that are marketable…and they're right. But none of my favorite bands did either. Unfortunately, we live in a time where if you don't make a record that's marketable then you are some kind of freak. I do this stuff because I love doing it. It's a hobby for me. It's like an artist who paints in their spare time with the hopes of maybe sometimes having a gallery show here or there. I don't see myself on the same level as bands that are functional, bands like TERROR who are career musicians. I know that is a touchy way of saying it, and they are my friends, but they are serious musicians who tour full time. That's not what I do full time. What I do is enjoyable, and if I can get some demons off my chest in the process, then I'm happy. I don't care if one person can associate with it or a couple hundred people can. I am doing this for myself. And I am not saying this just to appeal to the *Maximum* crowd, or what I remember the *Maximum* crowd being like. Maybe you guys have changed since I was a kid.

Carl: No, we're still the same leftist, progressive hippies that we've always been.

Dwid: I've got a story about INTEGRITY and *Maximum*. When we did our first 7" in '88 or '89, we got a terrible review from *MRR*. They said that we were a vegan straight edge band, which we really weren't. Then a year later almost to the day, we got a second review of the same 7", which said that they were wrong about us. I think it was because they realized that we weren't part of the whole youth crew thing that was popular at the time. Our roots were more GISM and DISCHARGE.

Carl: Really? On the first 7"?

Dwid: Well, and some other traditional hardcore bands.

Carl: You just mentioned the youth crew scene in the late 80s, which most people associate with being pretty positive. Why then on INTEGRITY's latest album does one of your songs reference "bringing back all the hate that we remember from '88"?

Dwid: That's a reference to Cleveland, and what people from Cleveland experienced during that time. Everyone hated Cleveland at that time. We didn't look the right way, we didn't dress the right way, we didn't say the right things, and we didn't play the right music.

Carl: But don't you think that you guys instigated some of that hatred? Dwid: A lot of it goes back to things like that first *Maximum* review where we were hated at first, and then everyone realized that we were as punk rock as GISM. I am not a guy who likes to toot his own horn or anything, but I am just saying.

Carl: I didn't realize that GISM was always an influence on INTEGRITY.

Dwid: Oh yeah. I was going to wear a Sakevi limited edition t-shirt tonight, but it got burned. My psychiatrist is holding onto it currently. He is an asshole. Did I mention that?

Carl: Did Sakevi's stage presence ever have an influence on you as far as INTEGRITY was concerned? I've heard stories about you trying to emulate him by bringing weapons to shows to intimidate the crowd.

Dwid: It wasn't really that I tried to emulate him. I admire him as a creative person, and as a talented performer.

Carl: What about all the rest of drama that has followed not only INTEGRITY, but the rest of Cleveland throughout the years? How much of that is self-perpetuated?

Dwid: My friends and I were talking about this a few days ago. We came up with this: if you don't say where you stand as a band, then you are going to get some kind of conflict and miscommunication from the people listening. Everyone is going to misinterpret what kind of band you are. One moment you are going to be called a vegan straight edge band, and the next moment you are going to be called a satanic death metal band. We never came out and claimed anything, so it left a lot of room for people to judge us and put their demons on us. Which is okay, except when they come up with things that are really ridiculous, and then that's when we start getting into trouble.

Carl: I am not talking about people misinterpreting you guys. I am talking about INTEGRITY rushing out of the gate to establish themselves as this larger than life band focused on fighting and burning bridges with specific record labels and other bands of that time. Don't you think that hurt INTEGRITY in the long run?

Dwid: We had problems with society. It's same thing as any punk or hardcore band. At that time in the late 80s and early 90s, it was very different situation. The people that are reading *Maximum* now were very different from the people that were reading it back then. They are more conditioned and accepting to this culture. With things like Hot Topic and the whole marketable aspect of hardcore and punk, pop bands on the radio are embracing this culture that we built. When I was a kid, especially in Ohio, I was like an Islamic terrorist. You were hated by your teachers, your fellow students, everybody. So I had a lot of anger for people the judged me for my SEPTIC DEATH shirt or my SAMHAIN shirt, or my funny tattoos.

Carl: Yeah, but I am talking more about the people that you had problems within the scene, rather than the people outside it.

Dwid: Well, we were snotty bastards. It's true. Everyone hates everyone in Cleveland. Like I said tonight. When people are inside this club, then everyone usually gets along for the sake of the music. That's what is uniting them. But outside of these walls, you're fucked. Expect to be backstabbed.

Carl: Why is that? Why all the animosity amongst each other?

Dwid: I don't know. While I was getting off the plane, I could feel it coming back. Some believe that Cleveland is the epicenter of a Bermuda Triangle-type magnetic pull that is created by Lake Erie. It makes everyone imbalanced. People are really fucked up here. You saw the show tonight. It was a weird mix of super-aggressive, angry guys, and oversexed stripper women. It's like a twisted version of a MÖTLEY CRUE video. It just doesn't make any sense. I have traveled all over the world, and there is nothing like Cleveland anywhere else. It's just a really, really weird place. To answer your question, I don't know why everybody hates everybody.

Carl: Any plans to return to Cleveland?

Dwid: I hope not.

Carl: Lets move on to why you guys broke up this last time after *To Die For* came out. What happened?

Dwid: There was a couple guys in the band that were from this other band that had some pretty strange politics to say the least. They said that they had changed their ways, but then things happened on tour that we didn't agree with. As you saw tonight, we had the same line-up minus a few of those guys.

Carl: I came to your show in San Francisco at the Pound, where you guys didn't end up playing. What happened that night?

Dwid: What I recall, and mind you I hadn't had that much sleep since I had just been in jail in Mexico. But I was sleeping back stage, when one of our guys woke me up and said, "We have to go, we have to go!" I was like "Wait a minute, I thought we had to play." It turns out that the guys no longer in the band had started some trouble with some people. So we had to leave before we could go on. I am not sure why they decided to start trouble, but I am guessing that it has to do with overcompensation for lack of musical ability and talent. It sucked to not play.

Carl: Lets go back to being in jail in Mexico. Why were you arrested?

Dwid: Well, Tijiuna is just a volatile place. I said the wrong thing to the right guy, and ended up in jail for it. Luckily I was smart enough to have enough money in my pocket pay the police off. But I rode it out until the right climax, so I could be subjected to this experience as much as possible without having to actually rot in a Mexican jail. I had the cash, but I wanted milk the experience for all it was worth. I was put into one of those cages that you use to put a large canine in. So there I was, in the back of a pick-up truck, crunched in a dog cage, having a blast. I knew the driving influence behind my release was money, which I had a lot of, so I wasn't that worried really. I mean it wasn't like I robbed a bank or anything.

Carl: Were you just being rowdy?

Dwid: Well, I was just being a drunk.

Carl: What were some of the high points of these last 18 years?

Dwid: Probably the friends I've made. I met my girlfriend, who I love dearly, through all this even though she hates the band. I met my psychiatrist over there, who in reality is a bastard and I don't like very much. He is from Germany.

Carl: So this psychiatrist travels with you wherever you go?

Dwid: Unfortunately and fortunately. It's a double-edged sword really.

Carl: (directed at the German guy) So then you go everywhere he goes?

Dwid: He only goes out when we go on tour. I can't deal with a lot of things, and I can't deal with a lot of people. So he helps me. But I don't want anyone to get the idea that we are some MÖTLEY CRUE band that can afford a psychiatrist, because we aren't like that. As far lows in the band's history, just seeing people leave over and over again can really have an effect on you. A lot of people have come and gone in these last 18 years. How old are you?

Carl: I am 27.

Dwid: Well then you have experienced a few generations of people that have left to go chase the American dream. That's what happens: people realize this is not going to pay them enough for that white picket fence in the suburbs. So they're like "I'm out of here." And so they go away and find someone else that is interested in doing this.

Carl: This goes back to my original question. Why haven't you followed in their footsteps? What's kept you here for the last 18 years, instead of chasing the American dream?

Dwid: Because I don't believe in the American dream. This is like free therapy. I am able to say whatever I want, and in a strange way, some people can relate. Not everybody. A very small few can really relate, but ultimately it is a very selfish thing for me. I am saying what I feel, saying what bothers me. It's a release.

Carl: Any chance of ever putting out a book of all your old *Blood Book Meanzines*?

Dwid: My friend Tony from England has talked about doing something like that. But that was really supposed to be a Cleveland thing, covering Cleveland bands, with inside jokes about Cleveland. Besides, I don't think either of us have all the issues, and we can't afford to pay for them on eBay.

Carl: Any side projects that you would like to mention?

Dwid: Yeah, I just did a band called SLEDGEHAMMER with some friends of mine. We just did EP for Martyr. It's kind of a sarcastic, fun project with lyrics about things that we did on prior INTEGRITY tours, like burning people in clubs.

Carl: Burning people?

Dwid: Yeaaah.

Carl: Like literally setting them on fire?

Dwid: Well their clothes anyway. You know when someone is a dick to you, or wants to fight you? Well, normally you would say, "fuck you!" and then try to push them or something. Well, I decided that it was a lot more fun to put your arm around them and pretend you're sorry.

Maybe even admit that you were in the wrong, all while you are catching the back of the person's shirt on fire. So one minute you are talking nice to them, and the next minute they are running in fear, on fire, yelling for someone to put them out.

Carl: How does your psychiatrist feel about this?

Dwid: Well, he doesn't like it.

Carl: I imagine that might create some enemies.

Dwid: Well, I always felt that people were going to be angry with me anyway.

Carl: Any last words?

Dwid: Within the hardcore community, I have always rooted for the individual rather than the group. I prefer the one guy who stands alone and does his own thing. I champion the individual, not the group mentality. This was supposed to be about getting away from that. Just because you have tattoos now, and you sound like us, doesn't mean that you aren't the same bullshit that society has always been trying to ram down my throat. Same bullshit, different package.

Midwest Spring Break 2005 Top Ten

INTEGRITY live
APARTMENT 213 live
DIRECT CONTOL live
PUNCH IN THE FACE live
P.E.A.C.E. comp
ENDPOINT *In the Time of Hate*
PREMONITIONS OF WAR CD
Visiting the Carr brothers in Norwood, OH (forkburn!)
The Anchor Diner in KY
Jeff Hess and his Clevo hospitality

RaNSoM NoTE$
by Erika Ransom

Boston Punks

Ohhhh…what a fucking weekend.

Boston punks on a rampage, anarchists drinking 'til dawn, bike gangs crossing town, and my ears still ringing from all the shows.

It was all a glorious, beautiful disaster.

A weekend like a warm spring day, letting us all out of our respective rat holes and whispering promises of a kick ass summer.

When you read this, I'll be in Europe, then off soon to SF. So, for the moment I can't help but dedicate a column to just the fun of the moment, and the Boston punks and friends who make me want to stay.

Touch of Class House

The show on Saturday (April 30) had been building momentum for weeks. The kind of show that every punk I saw on the street, in the bar, at the sex shop, or hanging out at Regeneration was looking forward to. And the anticipation wasn't because some amazingly brutal Swedish hardcore was coming into town, or the latest Texas hyped-up craze. No, the bands weren't famous. And the venue certainly wasn't CBGBs.

The show was so hyped that there were five separate flyers made for the occasion by different people, all with their own style.

It was ridiculous.

My second favorite flyer was hand-drawn and cut out in a weird organic shape that bordered the picture, defying the unwritten laws of the flyer geometry, choices of squares or rectangles. I wondered how Crusty Tim found the time to make such a masterpiece, between hanging out at the record store and breaking his collarbone biking into parked cars. Ha! Seriously, the flyer also offered "free haircuts."

Fucking punk.

My favorite flyer featured a background photo, and just the mysterious words "THE CHUTE" in the middle.

The bottom of the flyer read, "(oh, plus a buncha crappy bands)" and "A BENEFIT FOR ABC No Rio. If you don't bring money, that must mean you hate ABC No Rio…and you don't hate ABC No Rio, do you?"

Matt is such a smart ass.

If you don't live in Boston, you may be wondering what the hell The Chute is. And why all of us were so excited about this show.

Ask CCSS from Canada, BORN/DEAD from California, or even COJOBA from Puerto Rico, and they'll all tell you about taking a ride down The Chute. I guess you could say it's now internationally famous.

The Chute is an old-fashioned wooden laundry chute (thus the clever name) in a row house in Brighton–dubbed the Touch of Class House. The Chute is about two feet square, opens on the second floor of the house, and travels straight down, like a black tunnel straight to hell, to the dark and smelly basement several feet below.

Brave punks take the plunge feet first down The Chute like dirty socks on laundry day.

If you think jumping down The Chute sounds dangerous, well, you are probably right. Luckily, defying logic, nobody has broken anything yet. But who says punk is safe anyway?

All winter, cabin-fever induced Boston punks jumped down The Chute between bands during the shows, and crash-landed into a pile of foam and cardboard to cheers and beers.

Punk fucking rock!

This particular show-of-the-five-flyers was special not only because it was a benefit for ABC, but also because it was to be the last show at this space. The Boston DIY punk scene depends on basements to thrive, and this was the inevitable goodbye to yet another house.

The lineup this night was: NO ABUSE (HC Punk from NJ), FRUIT SALAD (Anarcho-hardcore from Boston), RINGERS (Oi punk rock from Boston), and 40 WATTS (Boston punk!)

When I arrived, the show was already packed with just about every punk in Boston. It was nuts. I had to escape to the porch just to get enough room to drink my beer and breathe at the same time.

Even before 40 WATTS hit their first note, half the room was singing sans-music to the BLATZ cover, "Tonight, we're going to fuck shit up!"

Seemed fitting.

The PA system was slowly dying, and it was hard to hear Jen's vocals, but the tunes were MISFITS inspired, right-on and classic driving punk. A gang of women punks danced up front and a whirling circle pit filled the basement–and this was 40 WATTS' first show! Hell ya. I'm looking forward to more from these kick ass ladies.

At the end of their set, hanging out in the basement talking to Joan about Montreal (a city I'm dying to visit), I looked over and saw water pouring out of a pipe attached to the house's water heater, which was located right next to where the bands had played.

Definitely a bad sign.

Within moments, the flow became a torrent, and looking around at all the exposed wires hanging around, we all got the hell out of the basement!

Upstairs, it was a Boston punk reunion. Political punks, drunk punks, rocker punks, people who I haven't seen in ages. It was like a weird dream, as everyone I knew seemed to be there, doing something ridiculous. Gretchen had a funny hat on and Jamie had the bright idea to smoke strawberry flavored cigars.

Then the lights went off. Probably the housemates trying to fix the water heater pulled the main power switch as not to be electrocuted. A smart move.

In the dark, a hundred punks were yelling and talking, and Mari, Gretchen, and I started up the La Rivolta chants, a gang of anarcha-feminists on a rampage.

Sara, Jacob, and Scott came by and offered everyone pasta in the dark. Holding the pot, they all sang, "Eat the pasta, eat, eat the pasta!" I couldn't refuse the dare, and put my hand into the mush and pulled out a few sauce-covered noodles. In my mouth, however, I soon realized that the trick was on me. It wasn't noodles at all, but Twizzler fruit candy sticks with tomato sauce. My first reaction was to stifle my gag, and my quick second reaction was to give Jacob a rounding slap in the face!

Ah, friends.

Then, after turning the water off and saving what equipment was left in the now-flooded basement, Mattie Cupcakes decided to keep the show going. So, the RINGERS played in the living room, starting a full-scale melee. At times a circle pit ran past the band, through the kitchen, the front room and then back to the living room.

Punk fucking rock and good times!

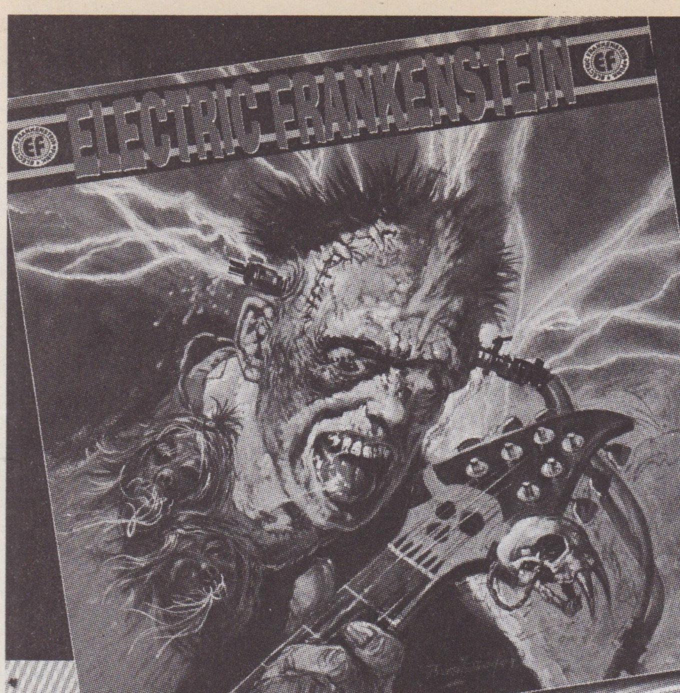
Midnight May Day Madness

"If I can't dance, I don't want to be part of the revolution," said Emma Goldman.

Right on.

After putting together a two-day festival, and two months of going to actions and organizing against the Mexican Consulate, the La Rivolta Collective decided to do something fun and social—a dance party in honor of May Day.

And, what better place to hold it than in the newly formed La Rivolting collective house. Gretchen and I had spent the last month cleaning the place up and finding roommates, and a party seemed like a good idea.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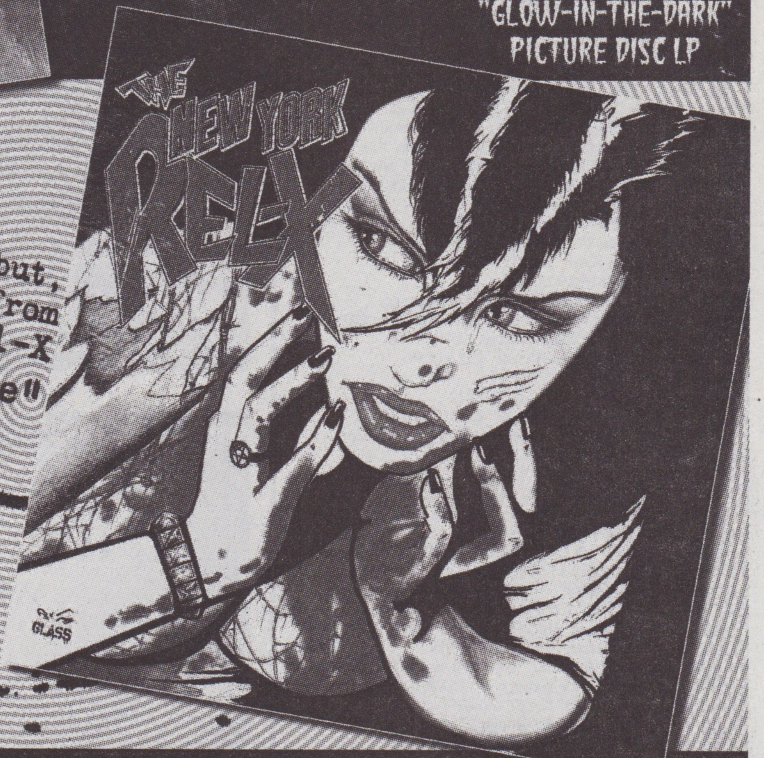
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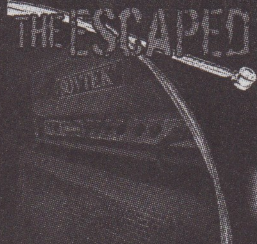
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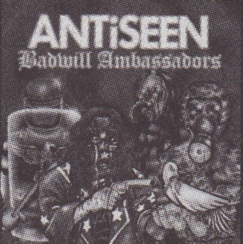
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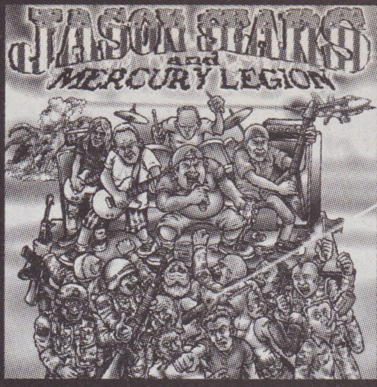

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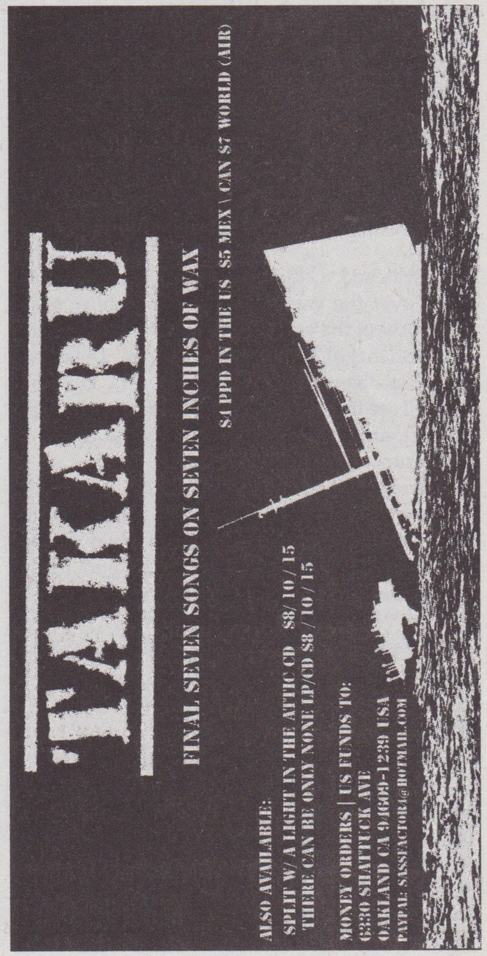
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Ha!

One bedroom was cleaned out as the "dance" room. DJ Ivanna played political hip-hop, international tunes, and women-led groups, and then DJ James played punk, funk, 80s pop, and some other tunes that kept me yelling at him, "Play more punk!"

Adding to the fun, I had my slideshow going on one of the dance room walls, and we set up a bar in the kitchen.

Perhaps the best thing about the party was a great moment dancing to ridiculous 80s tunes with my good friends and a whole crew of anarchists, anti-fascists, and other people I usually only see at rallies and meetings.

Like the punk show earlier, it was a rare moment for me of just having fun.

Sunrise

The party continued into the next day, and at the end the windows in the kitchen began to glow. It was time to go outside and watch the dawn.

"James, do you have any more cigarettes?"

"Sure do," he said, the last person other than myself still awake.

It was about 7am. I had just kicked out the last of the partygoers, and the house was finally quiet.

In a brief look around in the morning light, I could see that my new collective house was in shambles. The kitchen floor was covered in a black goo of ash and beer, banners were torn down in the hallway, and it seemed a thousand cans had been piled on every surface. Someone had scribbled a stupid drunken tag, "Jefferson" all over the refrigerator and kitchen lamp in permanent marker. For some reason, there were smashed cookies all over the floor.

It was a good time to go outside.

We sat on the wooden steps leading up to the back porch, and had the last beers in the house. We talked about bands and life and how things change.

I watched a squirrel play on the telephone wires over the yard, his eyes black shiny marbles. Most of the yard is dirt and ivy, strewn with the remnants of a chopped down tree. The backyard was abandoned for several years, and you can still see the odd beer can peeking up through the dirt, and pieces of metal and glass catching in the sun.

There is still a lot of work to do.

But now, there is my garden, a rectangle of bricks surrounding a 6 x 8 plot where I dug everything up, took out the weeds and trash, turned the soil and planted seeds.

I can't help but try to change things, because I feel hopeless just standing by in this fucked up world.

But, this summer, I am also making time to dance.

Endnotes / The Weekend that Never Ended

The next day HUASIPUNGO, from NYC, played another benefit show for ABC No Rio in Boston at the Harvard Social Forum. They were amazing! This band has been around for over a decade, and they still put out more energy than all the other (younger) bands at the show combined.

HUASIPUNGO reminded me so much of the early 90s hardcore scene, and bands like SPITBOY who had both something to say and the powerful music to back it up. HUASIPUNGO's music was fast and brutal, and the songs short as hell. But each song packed a punch, filled with meaning and emotion. Snider and the other members put forth so much genuine feeling into the music, and an attitude that I think is missing from so many bands today. HUASIPUNGO isn't political in a talking about the generic "issues of the day," sense, which is easy to do. Rather, they took on that which is personal, passionate, angry, and real. No bullshit or posing, just music expressing their experience and outlook on the world.

My third show in a row was on Monday, when I saw MDC play with their original lineup at the Elk's Lodge in Cambridge. It was like MDC's thirty-fifth day on a forty-day tour, and they were playing a part of the east coast with MOLOTOV COCKTAIL from NYC. MDC was, I have to admit, much better than I expected.

It was great to hear the music as it sounds on the records—fast as hell and sounding like it was thrown together in a speed blender. Dave was in top form, and his introductions to the old songs were right on target for what is going on today. There are still not many punk or hardcore bands that have the nerve to chant, "Kill the cops!" Right on. The Boston circle pit was in full effect and the show was a blast.

MOLOTOV COCKTAIL was also really good—it had been too long since they last played Boston! Hanging out with this crew and hearing about their European tour and recent adventures was such a blast. THE PROFIT$ played as well, and I really enjoyed the energy of the show, and repeatedly jumping off the small stage, guitar in the air!

Cheers to all the Boston punks, especially Gro, Mari, Adam, James, Lucho, Sara, Laurie, Brian, Jim, and everyone else who makes this town a place I've called home for so long. Love, Erika. (ransom@theprofits.org)

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Buffalo Ham

I suspect that some of you who may be literate enough to stop and read these columns every month instead of looking at the pretty pictures might also take the time to read your friendly neighborhood newspaper. If so, you'll probably remember that some tsunamis recently killed a lot people. Scientists believe that massive underwater earthquakes caused the tsunamis. More religious folk claim the disaster was caused by sin. Fred Phelps and his Super Friends declared that "God made Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve," adding that Jesus waved his hand in a Copperfield-esque manner and smote millions of Indonesians. Good one, Jesus.

Anyhow, like always, these people have it all wrong. Warzone Womyn recently went to Ann Arbor Michigan to play a show at a place called the Bad Idea house. We played with a band many of you might have heard of: Threatener. Some of you may have enjoyed their previous output as a band. I know I certainly did. That is until I met the *real* Threatener.

You see, the tsunamis in Asia were not caused by earthquakes or ornery gods. They were caused by a collective maniacal effort by this band we call Threatener. Never in my life have I met a band comprised of such depraved and lascivious *enfant terribles.* We met Michael Preihs before the show. He was decked out in timberland boots, 10 lbs. of gold chains, a leather jacket, and a necklace of human ears. He said he could afford such luxuries since he won a settlement against Nickelodeon back when he was a kid. Apparently he had appeared on Double Dare one time and had an allergic reaction to the slime they use on the show. A member of the band later whispered to me that he faked the whole thing because he was losing. When asked about the necklace, Preihs shot me a glare and asked if I wanted to contribute to it.

We all went back to the singer's place before the show. He opened the door and we were caught in an avalanche of Red Dog and Sparks cans. He told us to sit down and watch some TV, but the only thing they would let us watch were old documentaries on Ty Cobb. They kept insisting that Ty Cobb was the greatest baseball player to ever live and said we should "crack open a Red Dog" and give thanks for our existence made possible by him. We all drank our Red Dog nervously as the members of Threatener kneeled in front of the television, their noses pressed against the screen, staring at Cobb gouging the 2nd baseman's leg with his sharpened cleats. "Now that's a real man," one said, looking back at us accusingly.

One of the guys then sat a plate of steaming "buffalo ham" down in front of us and asked if we were hungry. Mike and Jeff are both vegetarian so they said no thanks. Ovens and I decided to taste some, though. It was pretty good, but a little tough. Kind of sweet, but had a certain spice to it, kind of like paprika.

The show itself was pretty good. You all know what punk music sounds like. I don't need to describe it to you. Everyone was having fun until Threatener went on. I'm not sure if they've had some kind of line-up change since the 7"s, but this did not sound like Threatener to me. "When did they add a slap bassist?" I asked someone holding a piece of Buffalo ham. "Those dudes are mad wacked out on pills man," the guy said. I listened to it for a while, and the only thing I can think of comparing it to would be something like Insane Clown Posse. They were all dressed up like Juggalos and yelling about how they were from Detroit and played 4-Square at Michigan Fest "back in the day." They played for about 40 minutes, but ended "early" because "these imbeciles don't know what true art is." I asked them what "true art" was and Preihs lifted up his shirt revealing a giant portrait of Ty Cobb on his back.

We decided to grab something to eat later after the show. Threatener kept insisting on Olive Garden, claiming that the food there is the only thing fit to enter their "virtuous bellies." We went to a burrito joint as a compromise, which ended up being a bad idea. One of them didn't get the "chicken deluxe" he ordered and sent the rest into a tizzy. "Get this man his chicken deluxe" they screamed as the Warzone Womyn cowered in the corner. College students, hungry for their burritos, bore the brunt of their anger. When the guitarist finally successfully navigated his way through the service industry and got his chicken deluxe, high fives were delivered and many a "woo" was yelled. We were mortified and embarrassed.

Threatener is now breaking up under the weight of their own depravity. They will be playing five last shows with Iron Lung and Ohuzaru from Italy. May 3rd in Ann Arbor with Melt Banana and also on June 10th at the Bad Idea House, June 11th in Pittsburgh along with Warzone Womyn, Running for Cover, and Fuckedupmess. June 12th in Buffalo, and July 2nd at Burnt Ramen at Barbaric Fast Detonation Fest.

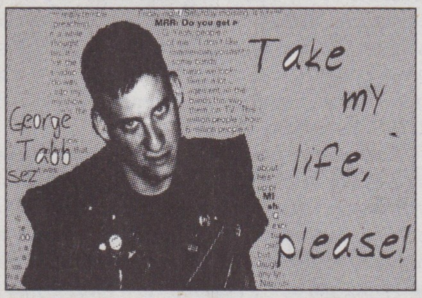
All I have to say is good riddance. Thanks for all the buffalo ham, suckers!

End Notes:

—Negative Tom

—Pick up the new *Tomorrow Will Be Worse* comp put out by Sound Pollution. It's got great stuff from Threatener, Vöetsek, No Value, The Sprouts, The Fasts, and the Runnamucks.

—I'll be leaving to Europe for a few days so please hold all the fan mail, gregory.mantooth@gmail.com



So there I am, crouching in the hot desert sun, my M-16 assault rifle aimed at the heads of the insurgents who are intent on taking over the base. As I fire the heavy black gun which can let loose up to 350 rounds a minute, the sound of gunfire stings my ears.

I look over to my pals, in their camouflage vests and hats, and see them firing their Pulse Rifles, Grenade Launchers, and even Uzis. It looks like we're gonna take these bastards. I, of course, am dressed in my punk rock black utility vest with the US pins. It is totally clear which side I am on.

As the sound of gunfire grows closer and louder, I ask Private Casey if we've got a Claymore Mine planted anywhere near by. These guys were getting close.

As he tells me we don't have one, I start to hear some screaming and my pulse kicks into overdrive. I think I'm about to have a heart attack and die. Hiding behind some desert greenery, and an old black steel barrel.

But let me back up a bit.

*

The feeling of sweat immediately hit me as I grabbed the M-16 from a guy named Tim, who told me he was a mercenary. The gun weighed at least twenty pounds, but felt more like one hundred. Especially with the abdomen surgery I had just had. Tim explained to my friend Katie and me that he was just walking around killing everyone, and I should give it a try.

We were out in an area known as Tempe Canal Park, near Phoenix, Arizona, and I had come to play some Strategic War Games. I had heard about it from a guy named Tunde, who, along with his pal Tyler ran these sorts of events. I had met Katie along with Tunde, so it only figured that she was there, punk rock stickers on her car, colored hair and all.

As Katie and I made our way through the beautiful desert with canals of green water, we hoped like hell no one ever drank what looked like toxic waste.

On our way to find Tunde we found a guy fishing off a bridge, and when I asked him what he intended to catch, he told me about the bass, carp, and sunfish. I seriously considered asking him if his future food had three eyes, but decided against it as my M-16 let out a screaming sound, much like you hear in the video game Doom when you fall into a pit of lava, or are wasted by those huge demons hurling blue balls of flames.

"What the fuck was that?" I ask Katie as we see Tunde in his black vest and camouflage hat off in the distance.

"You've been hit," she tells me, "and now you're dead."

"Fuck," is all I can manage to mumble.

Then I look down at my M-16 and the red LED read-out says "dead."

Duh.

*

When I ask Tunde what gave him the idea to start a company where people shoot each other with infrared lasers that can reach up to 300 yards, in broad daylight, he tells me it's the video games.

I figured as much.

Tunde explains that he and his friend, Tyler, who I later meet, are into online games like Counter Strike, Rainbow Six, and all that other Tom Clancy stuff. Tunde says he wanted to play those sorts of video games for real, and that's what led to starting his company, Ground Zero.

As we talk, people with guns return to Tunde to be "re-spawned" from his God-key. I tell Tunde I *feel* like I'm in a live video game, then I explain how much I loved Castle Wolfenstein when it came out. Then grew into Doom, and many other First Person Shooters.

Smiling, Tunde tells me he knew I'd love this.

*

The whole idea of Ground Zero Strategic War Games came to Tunde when he first heard about other places in other states doing the same thing. Here was a game that didn't use projectiles, and didn't have to be played indoors like that lame laser-tag shit I played back in New York. In this game, excuse me, Combat Simulation, you carry around real heavy guns, and can play anywhere.

In fact, as it turns out, Tunde has worked with and trained with SWAT members in The Chandler Mall, as well as schools, offices, apartment complexes, etc. The scenarios can be played out anywhere, and they usually are. When I ask Tunde where he gets ideas for his adventures, he tells me.

The video games.

It's like life imitating art imitating life imitating art.

Punk Rock.

*

After some briefing, I'm sent out on my first and last mission. We are to protect our base at all costs. Our team leader, who is older than the rest of his soldiers, explains to us that we should fan out and protect the cement and wood structure. As I put on my camouflage hat, which definitely does *not* match my vest, I have Tunde attach the infrared sensors that are wired to the gun with what looks like a telephone cord. Tunde explains that if someone launches a grenade anywhere near us, we are all hit as the thing has dispersion patterns. Turns out the mines do as well.

So I strap up, and make my way out into the desert heat once again. This time, to play a real life video game. As I do so, Katie and I notice a Coyote on top of a rock next to another rock that looks like a huge penis.

And for the first time in days, I feel manly.

*

"Keep firing," yells Casey as the insurgents make their way towards us. I do, having just slipped into a bit of my A.D.D. To do this, I have to quit aiming my gun at the pretty ducks' heads waddling nearby.

As Casey, one of his brothers, and I are firing away, we maintain our hidden positions until *it* happens.

It being my cell phone.

It rings.

And plays that little polka-chicken walk song.

Suddenly we hear screaming about our location, then I hear the word "incoming," and the next thing I know we're all dead.

Killed by a grenade.

*

As we make our way back to the base defeated, Casey, who is all of twelve, says, "George, you got us all killed."

He then tells me he's only joking as he introduces me to his four other brothers, Brett, Matt, Corey, and Colin. The latter tells me that he organized the whole thing for the day.

I tell everyone it's nice meeting them and it's time for me to go.

"Don't you want to play Black Hawk Down? asks Colin, who can't be more than ten years old.

I tell him I'm too old for this shit, and as I'm leaving he tells me that "Ground Zero War Games are better than playing fiddlesticks!" As I make my way into the hot desert sun to find a lost parking lot, I hear the kid sigh a breath of relief. Actually, I hear everyone else do as well.

Take My Life, Please.

1. For more info on these events go to www.groundzero-swg.com
2. I'm at www.georgetabb.com—and my second book is gonna come out this fall! Yay!!!
3. Punk Rock and Don't Stop. Ever.

it's a
fucking
guest
column
goddamn it!

by Katja Delo

Thinking back and comparing how punks are treated in other places in the world clearly amazes me. When I moved from Russia five years ago, I got involved with the punk scene here. My best friend first let me listen to one of her CDs and instantly I fell in love with the music. It was definitely amazing. I'm sure that most everyone who is into punk has had a similar experience. First the song totally overwhelms you; the beat, the chords, and the charging, fast vocals. That's when you fall in love with it. That feeling stays with you throughout the rest of your life. Last summer I went back to Russia to visit my grandparents, who I spent most of my childhood with. When I got there I realized that there were many things that I was not aware of, and did not ever realize existed—one of which was the punk movement. I mean, I knew that almost all parts of the world carried this movement when I witnessed such a transformation in one of my childhood friends, Sergey. He had this crazy haircut, I don't even think I have ever seen anything similar to it around here. One half of his head was completely shaved, and the other side was green and resembled a huge mohawk. He was the one person who definitely opened up a new world for me.

One day we went to a local show. I was totally blown away by the existence of something like that. These people, they stand out so vibrant compared to the dull conservative background of Russia with their colorful long hair and studded clothes. That whole night I felt like I was with my kind. People I had found that understood where I was coming from and what I stood for.

My hometown is a fairly small city south of Moscow and it is located right on the shore of Volga river. Since the town is fairly small, it only has one punk store. It mostly just has a few t-shirts, tapes and some CDs (I think they still haven't fully switched to CDs—I've got nothing against tapes though). So these punks, most of whom don't work (it's very hard to find jobs in Russia if you are still in school, or even college, so they have to depend on their parents), are very big into the DIY scene. They mostly hang out in groups; you will very rarely see just one punk walking by himself. Usually it's this big, happy gathering, strolling around town with beer bottles in hand. Also, a good thing about Russia is that the drinking and smoking ages are not enforced. The stores mainly care about making a profit, rather than trying to control somebody's choices.

From my point of view it seemed like the punks had it made, until later when I discovered quite the opposite. It was early in the evening, around about 7 or 8, when my friend Sergey and I were walking down a crowded street in the center of town. We were planning to meet up with some of his friends that he wanted me to meet. We were just making our way peacefully, discussing world issues that seemed important at that time. Across the street, a little bit ahead, there was a crowd gathered. They gave us these looks as if we were the biggest pieces of shit. I was very surprised at first, because in Seattle no one would even care about meaningless stuff like this. As we walked on the opposite side of the street I noticed that they were heading in our direction. They came up to us and asked for a lighter. We said that we did not have one and just kept on walking. They simply kept following us and yelled obscenities. I was actually getting kind of freaked out, and even though we were on this crowded street, I did not know what to expect. Then they surrounded Sergey, as I guess they don't pick on girls (now, what the fuck is up with that?) and kind of pushed him. Now at this point I could feel all the people on the street turning to look in our direction. I don't remember the exact details, but Sergey whispered something to me like, "Do you know how to get to the (place where we were supposed to meet)?" and I did. He told me just to meet him there. I did not know what he meant, but I just went along with it. And suddenly, he took off. I don't think I have seen anyone run so fast. This group of three or four guys chased after him. I was so horrified; I wanted to scream for help.

Soon I realized that if the police had come they probably would not stop anything, and they might try to blame the innocent. I felt completely helpless. I just kept on walking. After five minutes I saw the guys walking back, on the other side of the street. I did not see Sergey. I was scared to think of what could have happened. Then I realized that I did not have a clue where I was supposed to meet everybody so I just kept walking. A little later I spotted Sergey's greenish hair in the crowd, and he saw me at the same time. I don't think I was ever so glad to see someone. Later he told me that the guys were "gopniks," which are typical Russian skinheads. They hate punks. That just totally amazed me: that kind of hate, intolerance, and aggression. It had seemed to me that those things didn't happen anymore. I thought people outgrew that kind of hate.

Later Sergey told me that one winter he had to go to a hospital because he had a concussion. That was an account of a similar incident, which had scarier outcome. I can understand him running away from those skinheads, because when there are four of them and one of him it's a war that he cannot win.

So to get my point across, punks in Russia or anywhere in the world who get beat up for being punks are there not because it's a cool thing to do. The truth is that the society there clearly misunderstands and despises them. They are in the scene for all the right reasons. I look up to those people. Sometimes I wonder why punk has such a genuine appeal to kids around the world. As Felix Von Havoc, a person whose work I look up to, said, "Because it is a culture of resistance, rebellion and non-conformity. In a world increasingly dominated by an extremely banal and insidious corporate culture oriented around consumption of the products of mega corporations punk offers young people a chance to think, act and be different and unique. Our music is more than just entertainment and our zines more than just words on paper to fill moments on the toilet, they are legitimate cries of outrage, protest and social criticism aimed at the doomed society in which we live."

CrimethInc. Workers' Collective Bullet-in

Greetings, rockers and rollers of the maximum persuasion. This month, we'll stretch our "how-to" focus a bit to address consent and sexual assault, both important matters that everyone should be thinking about. This piece is a foretaste of the upcoming first issue of our new periodical, *Rolling Thunder*, which will be available by the end of spring. Look for updates at www.crimethinc.com, or write us demanding free radical literature at CrimethInc., PO Box 2133, Greensboro, NC 27402 USA.

Last summer was full of adventures: cooking in outdoor kitchens, building tripods, planning actions, and sleeping in treehouses in the middle of NYC. I traveled up the east coast, arriving at a new city every week. In the process, I fell for my traveling partner's partner. As a local organizer who had participated in several collective projects that involved facilitated meetings and complex protocol, I'd thought I already knew all there was to know about process; but now, deeply immersed in the beginning of my first polyamorous love triangle, I discovered that it could extend to a whole new level. There were long conversations to work out simple questions like who would sleep with whom each night, and ongoing efforts to keep each other aware of all our feelings about every issue. It was often an arduous process, but consequently, I developed a very open and expressive relationship with my new partner, and that felt healthy and good.

At the beginning of a tumultuous time for my new triangle, the three of us and the others with whom we were traveling biked to a party in the city we were temporarily calling home. By the end of the night, I couldn't balance well enough to get back on my too-tall bike. I was drunk. Too drunk. Throughout the night, like many others at the party, I flirted with and kissed lots of people. My new partner was watching me, a little put off by my behavior.

At first, I had been hesitant and cautious about how our new relationship would affect my relations with my traveling partner; but earlier that day, I had decided that if we were going to try this relationship, I should open up and be really vulnerable with my new romantic partner. I had decided that I was ready to sleep with him and had been excitedly awaiting the appropriate time to share this decision with him. Towards the end of the night at the party I kept approaching my partner and asking him to sleep with me when we got back to the house that night. I was excited to tell him that I was ready to do something that he had been wanting. I think he just kept telling me that I was being a drunk, but as a drunk, I kept insisting that I was sober enough to know what I wanted and that I wanted to fuck him. I was persistent. I felt like he wasn't being clear with me, but I think I was just too drunk to understand no.

The next day, I wasn't thinking about that interaction; I didn't really remember it. I had come home and crashed out alone on my friend's empty bed, and we all spent the morning getting ready for a busy day ahead. But that afternoon, his other partner, my traveling partner, accused me of sexually assaulting him the night before. She told me that I wouldn't stop asking him to sleep with me even though he kept saying no, that I kept hitting on him, and that I made him feel unsafe. Perhaps her account of the situation was colored by the jealousies and insecurities that would later play out between us, but because I couldn't even remember the night before, I was in no position to dispute it[1]. I spent the day terrified of myself, asking, "Could I be a sexual assaulter? I'm a survivor of sexual assault. How could I assault someone?" and, more importantly, agonizing: "I really care about this person. I would never want to make him feel threatened."

Finally, after a very scary day inside my head, I got to talk with him. He told me about what had happened the night before and said he did not consider it sexual assault. He said he had been annoyed with me, but that was the extent of it, and everything was okay between us. But everything was not okay. Even if what happened wasn't sexual assault, I had clearly made poor choices and disregarded how he felt, mistakes I consider inexcusable. Perhaps I didn't make him feel unsafe, but I am 5'2" and he is 6'2" and much stronger than me. What if he had been drunkenly, persistently hitting on me all night, despite my discouragement? Would I have felt unsafe? Should my disrespectful behavior be tolerated any more because I am small and arguably less intimidating?

Defining sexual assault is difficult. As in all aspects of relationships, there are few absolutes. Every relationship can only be defined and mediated by the people that comprise it; what is comfortable and safe for people in one relationship may not work for people in another. Accordingly, it is up to the survivor alone to name an experience as being sexual assault or not. Some actions, however, are unacceptable, regardless of whether or not they are labeled sexual assault. As we struggle to develop relationships free of hierarchy and power, we must also develop a language with which to discuss all of the spaces—complicated and unclear as they may be—in which we act without respect for others.

Sexual Assault—A sexual interaction in which a person knowingly crosses another's boundary: for instance, doing something that someone has said no to, or trying to do something that someone has said makes them uncomfortable.

Boundary—The line that describes what someone wants or is comfortable with. This may be predetermined or developing, and is subject to change without a clear or logical reason.

Coercion—The use of force or manipulation to pressure people into doing, accepting, or agreeing to things against their wishes. Coercion can include passive-aggressive behavior, attempts to induce guilt, persistent questioning, and threats, but it is not limited to these forms.

Consent—Consent is conventionally understood to mean permission, but this conception can be misleading. Here, it is used to describe the process by which people learn to understand each other's desires and comfort levels so they can interact respectfully and considerately. A situation must be free of all forms of coercion for one person to receive genuine consent from another; likewise, if one person asks for something and the other says they are not comfortable with it, the interaction can still be consensual as long as both people respect each other's wishes.

Most of us grew up fully immersed in this profit-driven culture, in which most public relationships—whether economic, political, or personal—follow a model of dominance and submission in which one party leads and the other follows. Inundated with media representations of these relationships, we unconsciously mimic those dynamics in our personal lives, developing "skills" for acquiring power and protecting ourselves in our own relationships. As radicals, we understand that the connections we have with one another are fundamental to the revolutionary potential of our actions. Consequently, we work to build self-reliant communities and develop emotionally sustaining relationships, by nurturing our ability to act and communicate honestly and unlearning our destructive behaviors. This is difficult, and we often revert to old habits and make mistakes. As individuals and as communities, we must create supportive, forgiving environments in which we can embrace our own shortcomings and errors and those of others in the spirit of a genuine desire to continue reconstructing ourselves. We need to equip ourselves and our communities with the tools to deal with the personal conflicts and complicated situations that inevitably arise as an integral part of the process of developing radical relationships.

To this end, we need a more extensive and sophisticated language with which to address violations of personal boundaries and work out how these can be discouraged. The discussion about how to cope with sexual assault within radical communities is constantly evolving, and fortunately, at least in some circles, it is finally beginning to be carried on in the open. Much can be taken from this discussion and applied to the ways other types of conflicts are addressed; but at the same time, there is much that needs to be reworked. We would do well to reconsider the current language available for addressing these issues: what the terms mean, what purposes they serve effectively, what their shortcomings are.

In our relationships, we often set boundaries and sometimes even ask each other for consent. In most relationships, these boundaries are unspoken, assumed: *I will not sit on my friend's partner's lap. I will only hug this friend for hello and goodbye.* In romantic relationships, we tend to define these boundaries more explicitly with our partners: *I will not have unprotected sex. It is not okay for my partner to kiss me in front of my parents.* In relationships of all kinds, from platonic to sexual, we can cross others' boundaries, which can hurt them or make them uncomfortable. This happens frequently, especially in relationships in which boundaries are only implicit.

Sexual assault is an intense manifestation of this violation of boundaries. When a sexual assault occurs, the one who crosses the boundary is labeled the perpetrator and the one whose boundary has been crossed is called the survivor, a more empowering term for victim. This is forceful terminology, and it can be really useful for assisting the survivor in naming and processing an experience. Simply having language with which to break the silence imposed by such a difficult experience can be a powerful thing. This language is also useful for dealing with those who are unwilling to be held accountable for their actions, those who refuse to talk about and work through their issues. Being labeled a perpetrator of sexual assault carries a heavy weight; naming an act sexual assault means that the matter will be taken seriously and, hopefully, addressed by all who hear about it. In this way, the labeling of the perpetrator can pick up where self-initiated dialogue leaves off.

Beyond these specific situations, however, the perpetrator/survivor language has many limitations. There is a wide spectrum of interactions that are unhealthy and non-consensual, but the term sexual assault describes only a narrow range of that spectrum[2]. Imagine if we could plot our interactions on a line from the most consensual to the least. The ones that are completely consensual, in which no boundaries are crossed, would occupy a small space on one side, while those interactions labeled sexual assault would occupy a small space on the other; somewhere in the middle, between these extremes, there would still be a whole range of interactions in which boundaries are crossed to varying extents. As it stands, the language used specifically to describe sexual assault is not sufficient for describing those interactions that fall somewhere in the middle.

The language of perpetrator and survivor can also promote a false sense that sexual assault is the only form of boundary violation worth addressing. Describing sexual assault and the survivors and perpetrators that experience sexual assault as distinct from other, presumably "normal," experiences of sexuality misrepresents any experience not labeled sexual assault as free of coercion. On the contrary, in our authoritarian society, domination infects everything, resulting in even our most intimate and cherished relationships being tainted with subtle—or sometimes not so subtle—unequal power dynamics. A division between "sexual assault" and "everything else" lets everyone who has not been labeled a sexual assaulter off the hook; it focuses attention away from the ways we all can stand to improve our relationships and our sensitivity to one another.

One of the most problematic consequences of our lack of appropriate language is that people are often reluctant to address more subtle or complicated experiences of boundary violations at all. The perpetrator/survivor language is so serious that in less dramatic cases—for example, in situations that are not violent or physically forceful—the survivor may even wonder if what he or she is feeling legitimately constitutes a serious problem worth exploring and addressing. If a person chooses not to use the language of sexual assault to describe a violation of his or her boundaries, does that mean it is not important? Many people are understandably hesitant to accuse loved ones of sexual assault or label them perpetrators because of the stigma attached to these terms and the drama that often ensues when they are used. This should not mean that non-consensual interactions go un-addressed.

It also seems to be the case that, as much as the perpetrator/survivor language is useful when dialogue is impossible, it can also halt dialogue where it might otherwise be possible. This language creates categorizations of people rather than descriptions of their behavior, reducing an individual to an action. As such, it tends to put people on the defensive, which often makes it harder for them to receive criticism[3]. The definitive implications and accusatory tone of this language can precipitate a situation in which, instead of focusing on reconciling differing experiences of reality, people on opposing sides struggle to prove that their interpretation of reality is the "true" one. Once this dynamic is in effect, the discussion is no longer about people working through their problems and trying to understand and respect each other's unique experiences, but an investigation about "objective" reality in which all parties stand trial. No one should ever be forced to defend what he or she feels, least of all someone who has survived a violation of his or her boundaries. Regardless of "what really happened," a person's experience is his or hers alone and deserves to be validated as such. To decide which reality is "the truth," we must give value to one person and not the other: this is validation on the scarcity model. When conflicts arise surrounding a question of sexual assault, communities are often forced to take sides, making the matter into a popularity contest; likewise, individuals can feel required to support one person at the expense of the other.

If we could develop a way of addressing these situations that focused on promoting communication and understanding rather than establishing who is in the wrong, it might make it easier for those who commit boundary violations to hear and learn from criticism and less stressful for those whose boundaries are crossed to address these instances. Whenever a person feels that his or her desires have not been respected, regardless of whether or not a court of law would find there to be sufficient evidence to substantiate charges of sexual assault, all those involved in the situation need to hold themselves accountable for the ways they have not communicated with or respected each other and work out how to make sure it never happens again.

We also need a language that can account for situations in which it is not clear who is the perpetrator and who is the survivor. Identifying one person as a perpetrator may not make sense if both or all of the people involved in the interaction both crossed another person's boundaries and had their own boundaries crossed. The language we currently have available to describe these situations creates a false division of the world between perpetrators and survivors, when—just as with oppressors and those who are oppressed—most people experience both sides of the dichotomy at one time or another. Such a binary sets up one class of people as entirely in the right and one as entirely in the wrong, as if one always bears all accountability and the other has no responsibility or no way to make their relationships more consensual. In extreme situations, this is indeed the case. We do, however, need to be able to address all the other cases, in which both parties could stand to improve their communication skills and sensitivity.

We need a new way to conceptualize and communicate about our interactions, one that takes into account all of our different boundaries—sexual, romantic, and platonic—and the ways they can be crossed. Practicing consent and respecting others' boundaries is important both in sexual relationships and in every other aspect of our lives: in organizing together, in living collectively, in planning direct actions securely. Non-hierarchical, consensual relationships are the substance of anarchy, and we need to prioritize seeking and promoting consent in all our interactions.

As every experience is unique, we should use language specific to each one, rather than attempting to force all our experiences into abstract categories; we can do so by describing each individually: as a deliberate boundary violation, for example, or as a decision in which consent was ambiguous. We can do much to break down the stigma and shame surrounding the issue of sexual assault by opening up dialogue about non-consensual interactions of all kinds. In developing our communication skills about our abuse and abuser histories, our sexual histories, and our desires, we can create the spaces to begin to talk about the gray areas of consent. We need to foster a culture that takes into account the fact that, despite how desperately we want to be good for the people we love, we sometimes make mistakes, fail to be truthful, and cross boundaries. We need to support both survivors and perpetrators: not to condone non-consensual actions, but because we all need to rid ourselves of the ill effects of living in a hierarchical, capitalist society. To do so, we must work together.

To broach these questions is not to deny that there is such a thing as sexual assault, nor to defend it as acceptable behavior. On the contrary, it is to demand that we acknowledge that we live in a rape culture: a culture in which sexual assault is pervasive, as are the forces and dynamics that promote it. Sexual assault is a part of all of us who have grown up in this society; we cannot ignore it, or pretend that because we ourselves have been assaulted or because we work to live anarchy in all aspects of our lives that we are not capable of sexual assault. The only way to rid our lives of sexual assault is to open the issue up. This means we must make it safe enough to come out as an assaulter, so that each of us is able to address, openly, honestly, and without fear, everything from the most minor acts of inconsideration to the most serious boundary violations. We are all survivors; we are all perpetrators.

*

Before my summer travels, although I had spent a lot of time thinking about and working on making my relationships reflect my anarchist ideals, I had only recently learned the uses of the subcultural catchphrase "consent." While becoming acquainted with this new term, I met a fabulous new friend. When we first met, we spent only a few intense days together, but the time I shared with this new friend made that word, consent, more meaningful to me than any workshop or article ever could. They consider consent a fundamental part of all of their relationships, and with them, I saw how consent could be enacted daily with friends and lovers.

At first, it was strange that they checked in with me so frequently about all the little ways we were physical with one another. Throughout both our casual and intimate conversations, they would ask for my permission before rubbing my shoulders, holding my hand, or resting their head on my lap. Other times, they would touch me lightly, then ask, "Is this okay?" before proceeding. I began to think that they had difficulty being physically close and were consequently especially conscientious about others' personal space, but they always seemed comfortable with the closeness I initiated—even when I forgot to ask for explicit permission before touching them. They also didn't seem offended or surprised that it was not easy for me to reciprocate the verbal consent they offered me. I tried to be conscious of how we were interacting and to vocalize my desires before moving into their space or touching them, but I've always had a hard time being verbal. As I had only heard the word consent used in reference to sexual relationships, I began to ponder their intentions. I kept thinking to myself, "Does my new friend have a crush on me? Do they want something more intimate than friendship?"

As I got used to my friend's style of establishing consent, however, I recognized that it was part of their personality and indicative of the way they tried to interact with everyone. As I realized this, my feelings about their questions changed. I stopped trying to read into their questions to see if they indicated unspoken interests, and started to appreciate that they were asking how I felt. I felt so respected. It made me feel how deeply my friend cared about me that they wanted to know how I felt about everything, and it made me feel comfortable with them very quickly.

Feedback and discussion are welcome; send them to redefiningconsent@yahoo. com.

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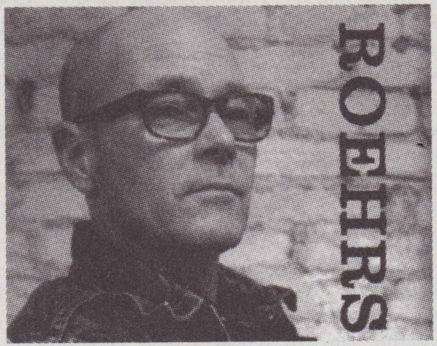
[1] In retrospect, the most problematic aspect of this interaction was that she defined my partner's experience for him. Regardless of a person's motivations, it is never appropriate to call someone out as a sexual assaulter without the explicit consent of the other person involved.

[2] …although it's important to point out that these are interactions that many of us are unfortunate enough to experience, and which often carry an impact on our lives disproportionate to the frequency with which we experience them.

[3] It is important for both the perpetrator and the survivor to deal with their actions and experiences in supportive environments. If the survivor is unable or unwilling to work with the perpetrator, some manifestation of community still should. Sexual assault and other forms of unhealthy relationship dynamics are community issues, and must be dealt with accordingly. Hopefully, all the individuals involved can receive support from a variety of sources.



This month TKO Records presents a hardcore/skinhead treat for you hooligans! The ESCAPED from Portland, Oregon, with Carter on vocals, come stomping into your neighborhood with a self-titled six song CD dedicated to Ernie Cortez of OBHC. Song one starts with a skinhead rock guitar riff and then slams into a two-fisted lyric "I wish that I could get away from the pain I feel inside." Song two is "Lost" and this fucker employs the same great TEMPLARS guitar style besides the obvious Oi! undercurrent. The ESCAPED have tough as nails hardcore hardware. Song three "Lifetime Ago" has a brute strength hardcore anthem boiling right underneath the surface. Strong shit! Song four is "Resent" and the HC madness comes charging right at your face on this one. Song five picks the tempo another notch for a break-neck speed punk attack on "Never Be the Same." This is a very good song! The final song is "Regret the Day." The deep feelings Carter puts into the vocals on this song will get you by the throat!

Recently, Gilman Street hosted a benefit for the family of Ernie Cortez that was well attended by OBHC members, The Most Hated Skinheads, and an assortment of other friends and acquaintances. The crowd behaved respectfully and the bands played well. We were treated to a performance by Chris (POWERHOUSE) playing with Ernie's old band DOOMSDAY DEVICE. The whole affair was very well done with appropriate respect for Ernie and his family. Thanks goes out to all the bands involved and to Gilman Street.

Hey skinheads! Listen up! A welcome reissue from TKO Records is on the street this month – a CD reprising the *Clockwork Orange Horror Show* EP originally put out as a double seven inch by Vulture Rock Records in 1995. Holy crap! This fucking material has stood the test of time! THE TEMPLARS start with "Doing The Dirty" complete with the trademark ringing guitars and gruff vocals supplied by Mr. Carl Fritscher and the bombastic foundation of Mr. Phil Rigaud's superior drumming. Song two is "You Better Beware" with a chorus that cautions the young skinheads as they venture out. Song three drops the mother fuckin' bomb on you punks and skins! "War on the Streets" is still a staple at TEMPLARS shows today — this song ranks up there in the pantheon of TEMPLARS songs that light the short fuse in the crowd — the kids go fucking crazy! Go to a TEMPLARS show to see for yourself. Every single punk and skin will rush to the lip of the stage and sing every word with the fist in the air! Now that's great entertainment! Song four is "Leaders of Tomorrow" with the TEMPLARS covering those early English purveyors of Clockwork Orange punk style, the esteemed MAJOR ACCIDENT. Song five is "Teenage Warning" — a cover song selected from the work of one of the the flag bearers of anti-fascist skinhead music, THE ANGELIC UPSTARTS. This version is extremely powerful and draws a political line in the sand early in the TEMPLARS career. There can be no doubt where the TEMPLARS stand on racist/Nazi skins. These individuals will simply not be tolerated. Song six is the title song, Clockwork Orange Horror Show", a TEMPLARS original which shows the masterful song writing and playing of Mr. Fritscher. Ten years ago this man was already writing extremely complex and well-crafted anthems!

This CD finishes with another brilliant slice of American skinhead rock! "Modern Day Ripper" stands as a towering reason why the TEMPLARS are the most revered skinhead band in the land! For your TEMPLARS product, write to Templecombe Records, POB 602, Bayshore, NY 11706, www.templecomberecords.com.

For ESCAPED and TEMPLARS product write to TKO Records, 8941 Atlanta Avenue, #505, Huntington Beach, CA 92646, www.tko-records.com.

Fuckin' A'!! UBSTAB, our favorite Cleveland assholes, has a terrific follow up to the *Destroy Religion* single released last year! This brute force hardcore diatribe burns a new pie hole for you —these miscreants are so fucking punk! The bad music on this six-song EP will curdle your Goddamn beer! UPSTAB has a very bad attitude. UPSTAB challenges your manhood: "Listen here dickface / We will rule you someday with our music / The lyrics mean something for twenty seconds / You're not privileged enough to read the lyrics you God damn retard!" The UBSTAB gives good advice to aspiring young punkers: "If you feel anger and resentment and you want to carry on the DIY ethic — stay destructive and dangerous / Start a fucking hardcore punk band!" For your own copy of the UBSTAB's *Somebody Threw a Gallon Jug of Thunderbird Wine at Me* EP, contact Even Worse Records www.geocities.com/evenworserecords

HAYMAKER has another scorching single on Deranged Records called *Lost Tribe 30.11.04.* This Hamilton Mayhem EP has the same screaming vocals you have come to love from HAYMAKER. These fuckers play unrelenting, furious hardcore that espouses the politics of youth culture in North America—read the words to "Another Friend to the End:" "This just what I fucking need / Another lay around that I can't trust / Cause I want to get fucked over again and again / Cause life just ain't shitty enough / So I will give you a knife with this friendship / I'll turn my back and you can hack it to shit / I've learned my lesson / I am fucking done / Now I've got the knife and there is nowhere for you to run! / I don't need another friend to the end / I don't need some fuck to run! / I don't need another friend to the end / I don't need some fuck to pretend / You're not my friend / You're not even close / So get the fuck away from me before I explode." For your copy of the HAYMAKER *Hamilton Mayhem* EP from Deranged Records contact HAYMAKER at www.haymaker.ca.

Höhnie Records from Germany has a fucking great EP out for you fucks right now! This Finnish punk band features male and female vocals and this little tramp blisters the planet! The name of the band is VITTU EI KIITOS and the EP starts thrashing immediately with "Se on Fuckin' Finland." Fuck yes! This is frantic punk with the urgency that we associate with the manic Finnish punks from the eighties. Fucking great! Contact Höhnie Records through their website, www.hohnierecords.de.

LOS REZIOS from Peru have a fucking volatile split seven inch on DNA Records with DISSECT from Finland. The lyrics on the LOS REZIOS side are in Spanish and from all appearances rail against the politicians and religious leaders whose war machine hobbles the workers whose sweat and blood make this world a better place to live. This reminds me of vintage RAW POWER! The guitars and vocals are superior! The DISSECT side is closer to metal style hardcore with screamed lyrics in Finnish and a more crust or grind feel. I would suspect the politics are shared with LOS REZIOS. For a copy of LOS REZIOS *El Inicio Del Rechazo* split EP contact DNA Records, noise.criminal56.38@c.vodafone.ne.jp.

YOU AXED FOR IT!
golnar nikpour

Arwen and I agreed the other day, over our last drink before she left for New York, that being coordinator of *MRR* is like having finals every month. You prepare as much as you can, stay up late agonizing over details, fantasize about the point just after it's all done, and then almost as quickly as you started, it's over. At that exact moment, the relief is so palpable as to be momentarily overwhelming. And then, literally overnight, it's the next month, and there's another issue to start agonizing, preparing, and fantasizing over. Naturally, this involves a lot of coffee and bad late night jokes, but what doesn't? We speculated that this is why time passes so insanely fast here; with new deadlines approaching every week after week, days and months become slippery, tenuous things. As a result, I realized at some point that I had work to make time for loafing around, goofing off, riding my bike aimlessly, having a drink in the afternoon, or playing four-square in the park. Now, I'm sure I don't have to point out the inherent incongruity in scheduling in laziness (or spontaneity), but I'd rather happily live in this contradiction than wait around for spontaneity to knock on my door. To be honest, I don't think I'm the only one who needs help learning this lesson. Circumstances may be different for each of us, but too often it winds up easier than it should be to fall into an actual (or psychological) routine that cuts us off from new ways to take chances, or to have fun.

Sometimes, it takes a friend. Last weekend, two of my oldest and dearest friends—Courtney and Trevor—were in town, passing through on their way to Portland from Flagstaff, Arizona. Just before their arrival, I felt mildly nuisanced that they were coming through so close to my deadline time. "Courtney," I said to her just before she left for San Francisco, "I am going to be very, very busy. I don't know if I'll be very good company." I could practically hear her eyes roll on the other end. "Relax Golnar," she told me. "It'll be fun."

I fret about their visit the entire afternoon before they arrived in San Francisco, not really accomplishing much in the way of actual work. When their car finally pulled into the driveway though, the worry dissipated. After all, it's never a nuisance to be around the people you love. It was not long before their trip that I told Courtney a long story about working here at *MRR*, and how it's been affecting my life. Admittedly, it probably wasn't my finest material. "Golnar," she said, when I finally stopped to take a breath. "Not only was that a story about how your life is boring, it was a boring story about how your life is boring." I laughed, because she was right. She was right, too, that we had a lot of fun, and that there was plenty of time to get everything necessary for the magazine to come out done *and* to stop and smell the roses, as it were. "Let's walk around," Courtney said, reminding me gently with her insistence that if you're not careful, throwing yourself into a project can become more about avoiding reality than it is about contributing to it and that it's important to find some way to strike a healthy balance between the two.

It's easy to feel like you can't shake the stress sometimes. Trying to outrun a sense of insecurity, trying to make all of your ends meet, trying to find some path away from the past, or turning the wheels without first figuring out how to move forward seem like all too familiar plotlines in our collective narrative. We would all do well to take more chances, to let go of the ghosts clinging to our thoughts, and to not become so connected to a daily routine as to use it as a crutch. After all, it's summer! It's time to be a little bit reckless and stupid. (So far, in that department, I've bought a white hooded sweatshirt and fallen off my bike. I've been made plenty of fun of for both, thank you very much.) It's time to make new art, make new music, make new love, make new politics, and to play with reality instead of burying our heads in the sand or running away. So cheers, everyone, and have a good summer.

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I was up until the wee hours of morning today working on my *other* zine, called *Square One Again*, for the latest installment of FUCK, or the Fanzine Underground Committee on Knowledge. (Don't ask me, I didn't name the thing.) FUCK first reared it's ugly head about three years ago or so as a zine collective hell bent on using their combined powers to, uh, release zines on the same day. I didn't contribute to the first installment of FUCK, but I was there ("there" equals New Jersey, in this case) to help put packets of zines together. I don't think it would be too far a leap to say that the kids involved in that project (whose zines include such rad shit as *Game of the Arseholes, Trash Faction, Destroy What Bores You, Sin on Wheels, Kängnave,* and *Hazardous Waste)* were a big influence on my interest on doing a punk zine in the first place. And hey, look at me now!

Anyway, the newest FUCK is gonna be one big zine with a legal sized page done by each of us. Some of my best friends and favorite zinesters are involved, so if you want to secure a copy of the zine for yourself, don't hesitate to write. Even though I spend the better part of my time working on *MRR* month after month, it was satisfying to sit down surrounded by bits and pieces of paper and slowly finish a new issue of my own fanzine. The layout breakdown in it is: 93% cut'n'paste, 7% photoshop. I guess working here has changed me after all.

We will be releasing the zine at Austin Fest this weekend, which will be a fond memory by the time this issue of *MRR* hits the streets. I imagine next month I will have a lot of awesome things to report about how incredible Deathreat (still) is, so stay tuned.

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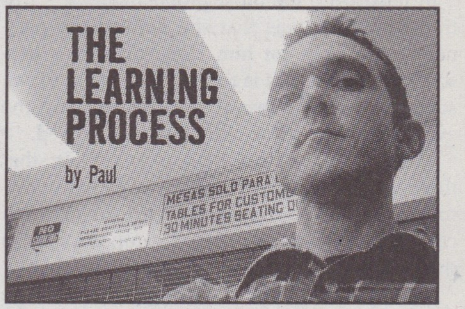
Hey! Please don't forget that scene reports are the best! Let us know what's going on in your scene by writing about it, or sending in photos. There are plenty of ways that you can contribute to *Maximumrocknroll*, so get in touch if you're at all interested.

As always, you can feel free to reach me at golnar@maximumrocknroll.com.

(playlist: Joyce McKinney Experience, Leatherface, Look Back and Laugh, Bastard Sons of Apocalypse, Naked Raygun, Smalltown, Vorkriegsjugend, Selfish.)



I Don't Need My Friends to Tell Me Who My Friends Are

I made the mistake of getting sucked into Myspace recently. Those of you who don't know what that is should feel lucky. It's an Internet site where you get to make virtual friends with people who are already your actual friends, and/or with people who you probably wouldn't actually like in real life. Anyway, some random dude on there posted something about how he hates *Maximumrocknroll* because of our narrow view of what punk is and how we're all cool and fashion-conscious, yadda yadda... The first thing I wondered was why someone with that strong of views about *MRR* wouldn't bother to write to us. Our letters section has been looking pretty slim lately, and I just assumed it was because people felt that they didn't have anything to add to our already brilliant and thorough content. Now I realize that people are probably just talking shit behind our (virtual) backs instead. I remember a column Tim Yo wrote at the Dawn of the Interweb stating that the whole thing was just a new way for people to shit-talk and spread rumors. Turns out, yet again, that Tim was right. But I'm not gonna write a column about how Myspace sucks, or the Internet sucks, or how people shouldn't talk shit if they're not gonna do it to your face. You can read all that on my blog.

Back here in reality, I'm feeling pretty damn good about life in general, and it has a lot to do with living (and working) with people who I like and respect. I spent a good part of the day pulling weeds with my roommates Dave and Noah, drinking cans of bad American beer. They, like myself, got into punk in the early 80s, still play punk rock, and still go to shows. We all still get a little too drunk sometimes, love Social Unrest, and hate the fucking system. And we all have jobs and we love our little black kitty cat ("Little Kitty") and we get giddy and blush when we talk about our girlfriends. When I was younger I could never really picture what being an older punk would be like. Tim was the only role model I had in that respect, and although I loved him, there was no way in hell I wanted to be a single, chain-smoking workaholic who lived on pizza and spent all of his waking hours working on a punk fanzine when I got older. Besides, Tim was always the exception to the rule. I don't think I really believed you could be a grown-up and punk, or that you could have a job and live in an awesome house and still be a punk. The fact that I live with two dudes who are my age and come from the same place as I do, and that none of us are washed up sellouts, gives me endless amounts of inspiration.

A Funeral for a Friend

While Noah was pulling up some nasturtiums from the side of the house, he found the body of our other cat, who's been missing for over a month. Charles was big, white and deaf. He couldn't hear himself meow, so he'd just wail incredibly loudly all day and night. He was also incapable of cleaning himself, so when you'd pet him your hands would end up black, just like when you read a copy of *MRR*. He'd jump up on the kitchen table and roll around on his back, and if he wasn't paying attention he'd just fall right off the side. He was so clumsy—he was only cat I've ever seen fall and not land on his feet. He'd just plop right onto his back and look up at you like you were the crazy one...

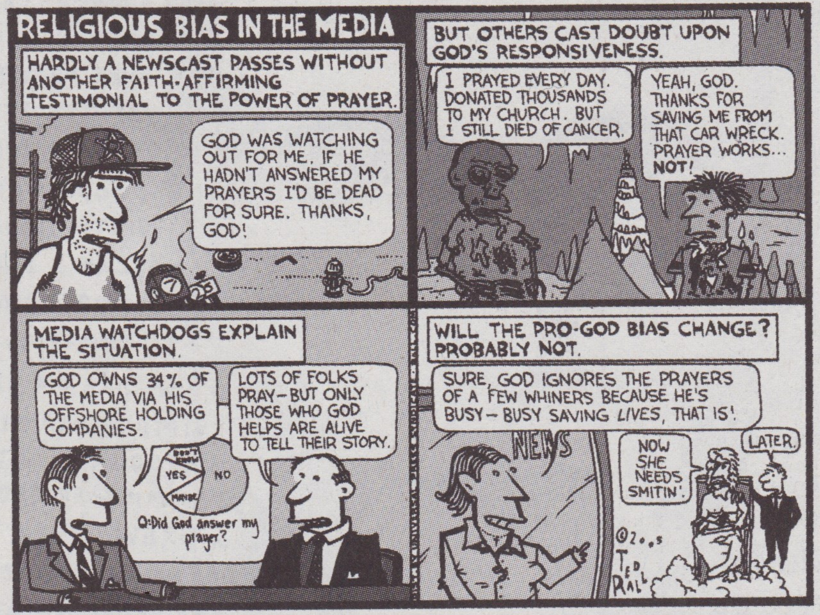
Charles was our roommate Jessica's cat, and on top of all kinds of other stress in her life, she's been worried sick about her missing kitty. I had to call Jessica to tell her we'd found him. At least it's closure, she said. Later, we had a loose-knit funeral for Charlie. Jessica's friend Kim drunkenly composed a song on the piano, and Noah added a breakdown and some lead parts to spice it up. Little Kitty stood by and howled a bit as Jessica buried her cat. Dave and Danny planted a ficus tree on top of his grave, and me... well, I wrote this.

Goodbye Charles, we miss you.

There Must Be Something Wrong with Us

Speaking of dudes my age who inspire me, I'm proud to have been playing music with my buddies Steve and Erick for almost four years now! ONION FLAVORED RINGS has a record coming out real soon on No Idea, and we're about to go on our first tour of the Western US in late July/early August. Please come to the show, drink, dance, say hello to some old geezers, take us swiming! Or at least hang out with us at the Waffle House. Check out our tour schedule and some tunes on our Myspace page (seriously!): www.myspace.com/onionflavoredrings. Maybe we'll even be your "friend."

Since *MRR* is all about telling you what to do: please take care of yourself, use sunscreen, take your vitamins, and drink plenty of water. ;) Paul (paul@maximumrocknroll.com)


RELIGIOUS BIAS IN THE MEDIA
HARDLY A NEWSCAST PASSES WITHOUT ANOTHER FAITH-AFFIRMING TESTIMONIAL TO THE POWER OF PRAYER.
GOD WAS WATCHING OUT FOR ME. IF HE HADN'T ANSWERED MY PRAYERS I'D BE DEAD FOR SURE. THANKS, GOD!
BUT OTHERS CAST DOUBT UPON GOD'S RESPONSIVENESS.
I PRAYED EVERY DAY. DONATED THOUSANDS TO MY CHURCH. BUT I STILL DIED OF CANCER.
YEAH, GOD. THANKS FOR SAVING ME FROM THAT CAR WRECK. PRAYER WORKS... NOT!
MEDIA WATCHDOGS EXPLAIN THE SITUATION.
GOD OWNS 34% OF THE MEDIA VIA HIS OFFSHORE HOLDING COMPANIES.
DON'T KNOW
YES
NO
MAYBE
Q: Did God answer my prayer?
LOTS OF FOLKS PRAY—BUT ONLY THOSE WHO GOD HELPS ARE ALIVE TO TELL THEIR STORY.
WILL THE PRO-GOD BIAS CHANGE? PROBABLY NOT.
SURE, GOD IGNORES THE PRAYERS OF A FEW WHINERS BECAUSE HE'S BUSY—BUSY SAVING LIVES, THAT IS!
NEWS
NOW SHE NEEDS SMITIN'.
LATER.
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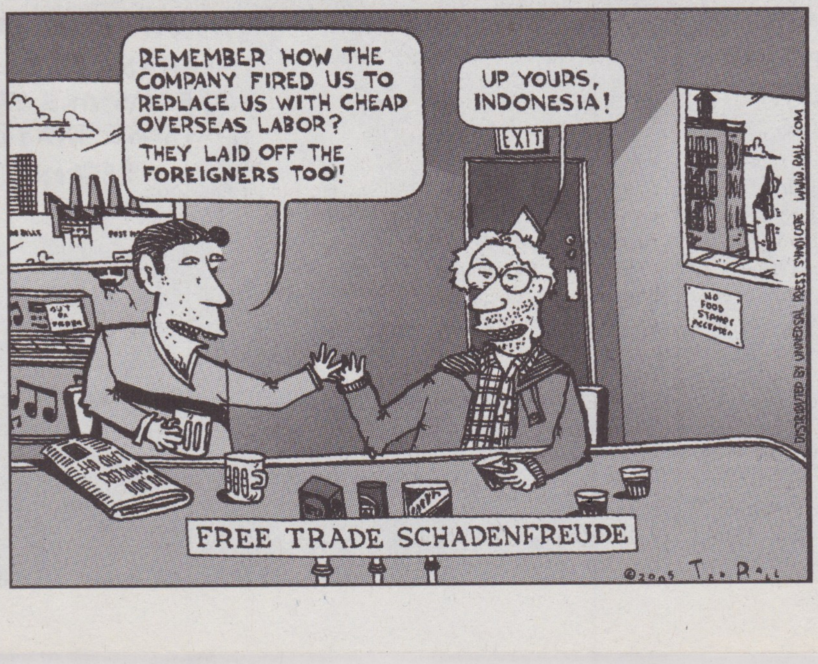
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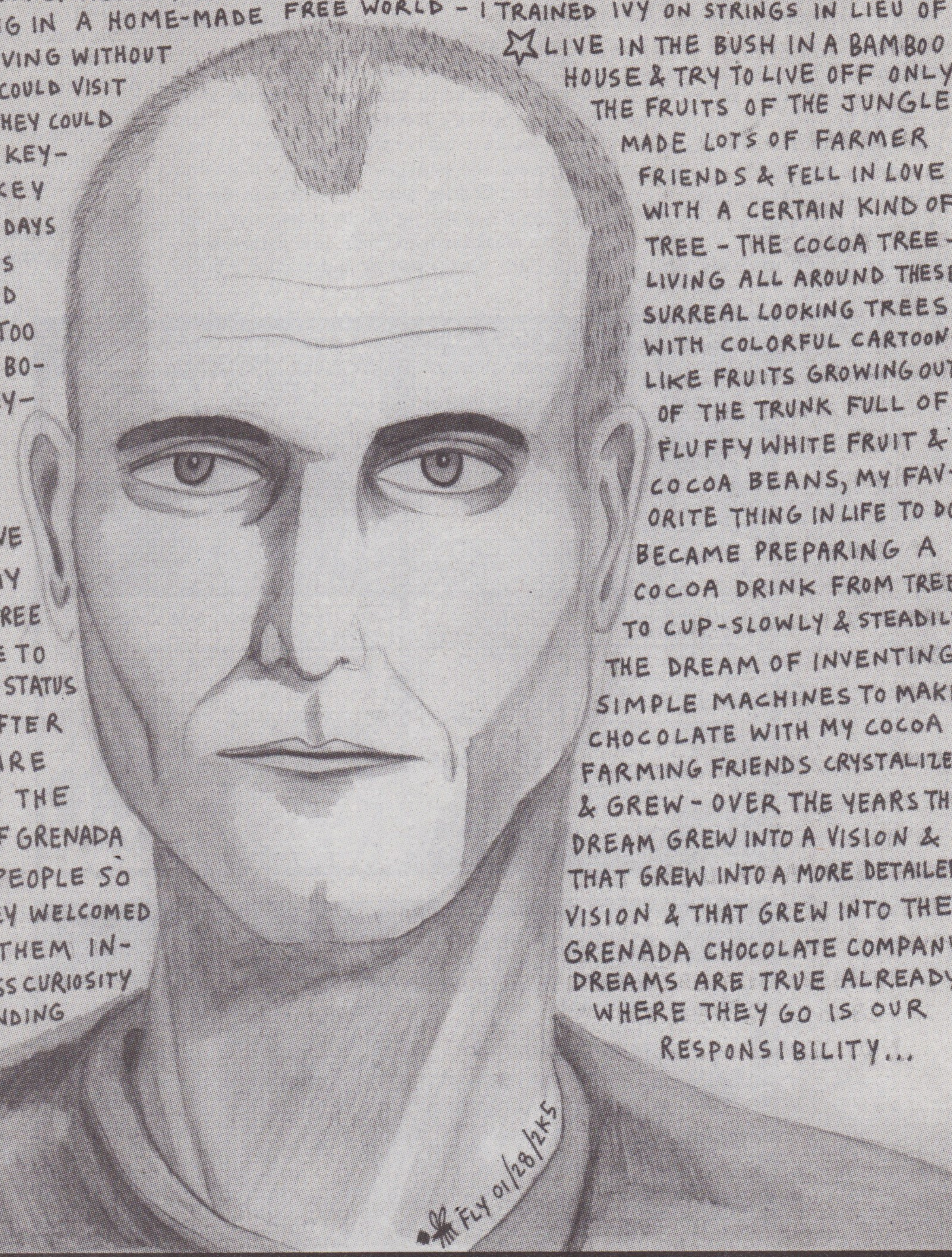
I'LL TRY TO BE SPONTANEOUS - I THINK I CAN PULL IT OFF - HOW ABOUT - THINGS REALLY CHANGED IN 1988 - BEFORE THAT I THINK I DID MORE OR LESS AS I WAS TOLD - I WASNT SMART ENOUGH AT THE TIME TO KNOW WHY THIS WAS A PROBLEM BUT EVERYTHING FELT KIND OF WRONG - THE FUTURE LOOKING UNSATISFYINGLY PREDICTABLE & UNINSPIRING - BORING OPTIONS - AFTER A PIVOTAL PERIOD OF NEAR DESPAIR I FEEL LUCKY TO HAVE HAD THE PRESENCE OF MIND TO CHANGE EVERYTHING REALLY ABRUPTLY - WITH THE LOVE & SUPPORT OF NEW SQUATTER FRIENDS I MOVED INTO A TALL SKINNY ABANDONNED BUILDING ACROSS THE STREET - SPRUCE ST. - PHILLY PA - BY MYSELF FUELED BY A POLITICALLY PROUD SENSE OF INVULNERABILITY & DETERMINATION NOT TO SUCCOMB TO AN INDOCTRINATED FEAR OF LIVING IN A HOME-MADE FREE WORLD - I TRAINED IVY ON STRINGS IN LIEU OF A BACKDOOR - LIVING WITHOUT LOCKS - ANYONE COULD VISIT ME AT HOME IF THEY COULD FIND ME - A LOW KEY - OR ACTUALLY NO KEY LIFE - SPENT MY DAYS MOVING SOCIETY'S WOULD-BE WASTED FOOD TO PEOPLE TOO FREE & BUSY TO BOTHER WITH MONEY - THE CARRIBEAN JUNGLE ALSO SEEMED LIKE A NICE PLACE TO LIVE FREE - WHEN I SAY "FREE" I MEAN FREE NOT TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE ECONOMY OF STATUS QUO BECAUSE, AFTER ALL, MAMMALS ARE MAMMALS - ON THE LITTLE ISLAND OF GRENADA I DISCOVERED PEOPLE SO NICE THAT THEY WELCOMED WHAT WAS TO THEM INSANE HARMLESS CURIOSITY NOT UNDERSTANDING WHY I WOULD ☆→ ☆ LIVE IN THE BUSH IN A BAMBOO HOUSE & TRY TO LIVE OFF ONLY THE FRUITS OF THE JUNGLE - MADE LOTS OF FARMER FRIENDS & FELL IN LOVE WITH A CERTAIN KIND OF TREE - THE COCOA TREE - LIVING ALL AROUND THESE SURREAL LOOKING TREES WITH COLORFUL CARTOON-LIKE FRUITS GROWING OUT OF THE TRUNK FULL OF FLUFFY WHITE FRUIT & COCOA BEANS, MY FAVORITE THING IN LIFE TO DO BECAME PREPARING A COCOA DRINK FROM TREE TO CUP - SLOWLY & STEADILY THE DREAM OF INVENTING SIMPLE MACHINES TO MAKE CHOCOLATE WITH MY COCOA FARMING FRIENDS CRYSTALIZED & GREW - OVER THE YEARS THE DREAM GREW INTO A VISION & THAT GREW INTO A MORE DETAILED VISION & THAT GREW INTO THE GRENADA CHOCOLATE COMPANY - DREAMS ARE TRUE ALREADY WHERE THEY GO IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY...



Moth aka Mott - 01/28/2K5 - NYC

I met Moth sometime in the early 90s through a Philly connection that I cant remember - he started hanging out with folks in my building & convinced a few of us to go to Grenada in the winter of '95 to live in the bush & help him build a house - that was an amazing experience & really pushed the concept of DIY living to the extreme - I think some of the hardest work Ive ever done is thatching a roof - these days Moth lives full time in Grenada running a chocolate factory & cocoa farm - he makes the best chocolate Ive ever tasted & its all organic & vegan!!

check the website - www.grenadachocolate.com to contact fly email: fly@bway.net - put MRR in the subject so I know its not spam or snail mail to Fly PO Box 1318 Cooper Stn NYC NY10276

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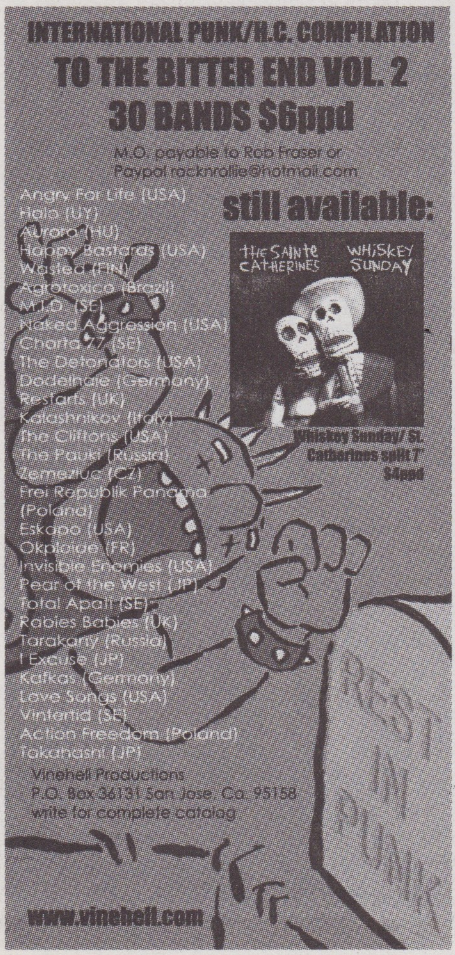

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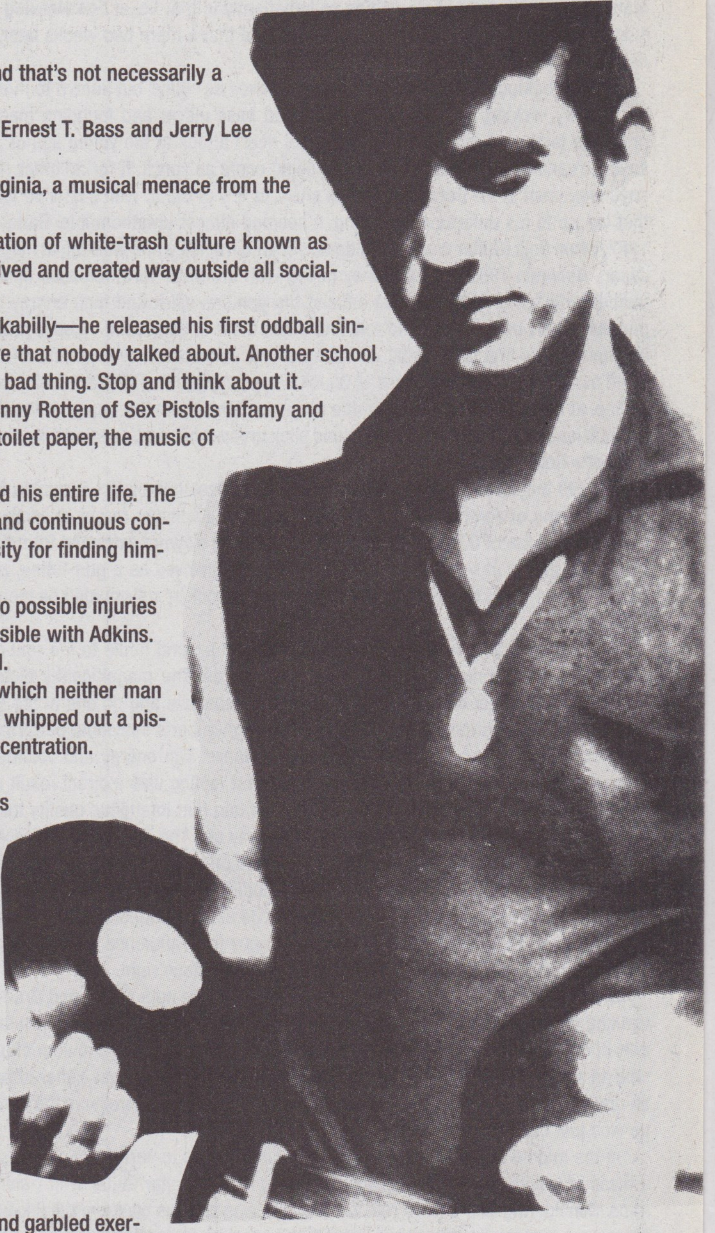
MRR NEWS

MRR NEWS FOR ISSUE #266 COMPILED BY ARIEL CELESTE & GOLNAR NIKPOUR

HASIL ADKINS: 1938-2005



From *Relish Now*

Hasil Adkins. That's pronounced "hassle." Never has a name been more apropos—and that's not necessarily a bad thing. Adkins, who died April 26, was his own beast, both musically and socially.

Adkins was one of rock 'n' roll's great characters, the cultural missing link between Ernest T. Bass and Jerry Lee Lewis, replete with a downwind slaughterhouse whiff of Hank Williams and Sid Vicious.

He was a brawling boozehound and a law-breaking hellion who lived in rural West Virginia, a musical menace from the cinematic fringes of Deliverance.

He was also the unwitting archetype of the doublewide, downwardly mobile glorification of white-trash culture known as psychobilly. He didn't do it on purpose; it just happened. He didn't know (or care) that he lived and created way outside all socially accepted cultural guidelines.

One school of thought celebrates the notion that Adkins' psychotic chokehold on rockabilly—he released his first oddball singles in the mid-1950s—was related to the birth of rock 'n' roll, albeit the "funny" relative that nobody talked about. Another school contends that he spent nearly 50 years trying to kill it off. Again, that's not necessarily a bad thing. Stop and think about it.

Consider that Sting had a pronounced dislike of him. Know that he was loved by Johnny Rotten of Sex Pistols infamy and Lux Interior of The Cramps. Noted author Nick Tosches once wrote: "Like the Bible and toilet paper, the music of Hasil Adkins belongs in every household." He meant it.

Adkins was 67 when he died in the three-room tarpaper shack in which he had lived his entire life. The cause of his death has not yet been released. It could be anything. Adkins' conspicuous and continuous consumption of alcohol is well documented. His use of firearms, combined with his propensity for finding himself embroiled in antics of an almost surreal nature, is also a matter of record.

Speculation on websites dedicated to Adkins' music and serial misadventures points to possible injuries that he sustained after being hit by an all-terrain vehicle. It's possible. Anything was possible with Adkins.

Every ticket to see him was an all-excess pass. That's part of what made him special.

Adkins once had a prolonged close-range shootout with a jealous husband during which neither man was hit, but Adkins went to jail, his home away from home. During a performance, Adkins whipped out a pistol and started blazing away at a ventilator fan that he later said was hampering his concentration.

Adkins was "extreme" long before it became a trendy buzzword.

He speculated that he had written 8,000 songs. He was not long on book learning, but his imagination knew no bounds. This resulted in songs that were often outrageously funny, in a disturbing sort of way.

"No More Hot Dogs" saw him behead his hot-dog wielding girlfriend and mount her melon on the wall. Romance was also a bit of a problem. "She Said" chronicled a regrettable one-night stand, including the memorable couplet, "She looked like a dyin' can of commodity meat."

Adkins also had a thing about chickens. He devoted an entire album, *Poultry In Motion*, to the pleasures of barnyard buddies and fowl cuisine. "The Chicken Walk" was one of several attempts by Adkins to launch a dance craze ("The Hunch" was another). He performed as a one-man band. He played/assaulted his guitar. The racket was raw and loud, rubbery and discordant. He changed chords when he felt like it and he adhered to no set time signature. He accompanied himself on drums and off-kilter blasts of percussion. On occasion, he played organ with his elbow. It was the sound of a human train wreck, a true primitive at play.

His singing was a blend of sub-glottal moans and blood-chilling screeches, a slurred and garbled exercising of demons. It was as if he were singing in tongues, lured into a trance state by a passionate belief in what he was doing and an adult dose of vodka and cheap beer.

Every show was a fresh and invigorating adventure. A good show might last 40 minutes. Twenty minutes was more the norm. It didn't matter. Everybody got his or her money's worth.

Adkins was an unrepentant wild man, an idiosyncratic mess. His music was not pretty, nor was it technically adept. But it was pure, almost unfathomably so in this era of mass-produced product. It came from his soul and from his mind. It was his, and his alone. And he believed in it with every fiber of his being. It made you smile. It made you shimmy, shake and shiver. It was fabulous.

Hasil Adkins was an American musical original. There aren't many people left who can make that claim. The result: The world's a bit sadder without Adkins. And probably safer, too.

REMEMBERING BASS WOLF: ONE FAN'S GOODBYE

By Allison Goldstein

By 7:25 the line outside Bottom of the Hill in San Francisco had already reached the end of the block, leaving clusters of excited fans standing in the middle of the otherwise empty street. The club itself, situated in a more remote section of city and surrounded by cracked sidewalks and foreboding looking warehouses only seemed to increase the overwhelming sensation that something amazing was about to happen, as if its very location was reserved for the ardently devoted or the fortuitously inclined. The doors were not scheduled to open until 8 o'clock, but with the pre-sale tickets already sold out from weeks before, it seemed I wasn't the only person who counted on this evening quickly becoming an entirely sold out event. And why shouldn't it? After all this is Guitar Wolf we're talking about. A band whose reputation for live shows seemed the echo one recurring sentiment, "it was the loudest show I ever saw." But on March 14th 2005, none of us waiting so impatiently in that ticket line weaving deep into the ill lit, vacant side streets of San Francisco could have guessed that a mere two weeks later, one of our idols would be dead.

Hideaki Sekiguchi, known on his record sleeves as "Billy" but known to most of his fans as Bass Wolf, the fiercely rocking, tattoo-laden, leather clad bass player and founding member of the internationally notorious punk rock trio, Guitar Wolf, died of heart attack at the young age of 38 on March 30, 2005. For anyone reading the obituaries his death could come as shock, if for no other reason than his age, but for anyone present at the Bottom of the Hill show, or any of Guitar Wolf's final performances during the weeks that led up to his unfortunate passing, it seemed almost unfathomable. Guitar Wolf as a band started in 1987, when Seiji (Guitar Wolf) and Hideaki became friends while working at neighboring shops in Harajuku, Japan. Between 1993 and 2004 they (along with drummer Toru) released nine albums of ear shredding, unabashedly raw recordings that infused the genuine spirit and high energy of early Punk with the fist pumping heart beat of rock and roll, and made them underground legends around the world. Upon hearing them for the first time, Guitar Wolf seemed like some test tube experiment from a 1950s style Japanese Sci-fi movie combining the genes of Chuck Berry and Iggy Pop with a lethal dose of gamma radiation. This insane, at times almost indecipherable noise combined with the image of the three members head to toe in black leather with dark sunglasses and slick greaser hairdos, seemed only too appropriate to their Fuck-you-Let's-Rock! appeal.

In 1999 they starred as themselves in the Japanese campy Sci-fi zombie flick *Wild Zero*, where they defeat a gang of zombies with radioactive guitar picks, never forget to comb their hair, and Guitar Wolf himself slices the UFO Mother-ship clean in half using a sword extracted from the neck of his guitar (never mind how that works with the strings). Playing themselves as a gun-toting, zombie-slashing rock band that saves the world through the awesome power of rock 'n' roll couldn't be more suited to these Japanese Punk Gods.

The albums and movies themselves only played second fiddle to the real core of their legacy—their alcohol driven, notoriously chaotic live performances. The magnificently distorted guitars, the raucous howling, the fact that most of their songs are in Japanese and no one in the English speaking audience cared, combined with the sheer intensity of each member's individual performance created an unforgettable experience, not to mention temporary deafness. The energy and volume at the Bottom of the Hill show proved no exception, and a huge part of that feeling was a direct result of Billy. The difference between being just another band and becoming something more, something truly special, goes beyond the music to contain that intangible quality that not only comes from talent, but from a kind of sincerity and connection with the audience.

Taking their cues from influences like Link Wray and The Ramones, all devotees of Rock were considered honorary members of the Wolf pack, defining the band as the kind of heroes that always made you feel like you were on their level. A presence which definitely made itself felt during their live performances, including the one at Bottom of the Hill, when Guitar Wolf grabbed a kid from the audience, threw his own guitar around the guy's neck, proceeded to give a thirty-second instruction, then simply began molding the guy's fingers loosely into recognizable chords and continued shouting "Play! Play!*,*" as they launched into a song. It didn't come across a simple gimmick either, though it was one they often did at shows. This random guy from audience was on stage somewhere close to ten minutes, just rocking out with the band, with Guitar Wolf spastically urging him on while Bass Wolf smiled sideways from stage right.

Even before the band took the stage that night when both Guitar and Drum Wolf were hiding somewhere in the back of the club, there was Bass Wolf in full leather gear, walking casually through the crowds, grinning wildly, drink in hand. Fans would smile and nod to him and he would eagerly walk over meet them, laughing and speaking excitedly in rather good English. I watched Billy put his arm around the shoulder of a small girl wearing a Siouxsie Sioux t-shirt while speaking energetically to a small circle of fans, who all seemed to glow in his presence, a quality he had that he was either unfazed by or completely unaware of. What came through in those sweet moments when he seemed so one of us, so like any other excited fan thrilled just to be there, was the same feeling that came through when he played; he loved rock 'n' roll, and at the end of the night he was just like us, a fan.

In the middle of the set, when Billy took center stage to perform the band's English cover of the Rolling Stone's "Satisfaction," the entire audience seemed to explode into a mass of waving, screaming lunatics. I stuffed my ten-dollar Guitar Wolf t-shirt through my belt and dove straight in, covered in a layer of sweat that was probably only 25% mine. Considering Billy's main role in the group was as bass player and back-up vocalist, it was understandably difficult for him to captivate the audience the same way a lead singer can (especially a singer as crazed and overt as Guitar Wolf). But when Billy took the mic and started wailing into the first verse of the song, the stage became entirely his. For a man who relished in having the same birthday as Elvis (January 8th), perhaps Billy could feel the approving smile of the King floating down from above as he gripped his bass and rocked as loud and hard as Elvis did on his best days.

Back on the early evening of March 14th, I stood in line praying I'd be able to get inside the club before the occupancy cut off. I'd been waiting three years to see Guitar Wolf live, ever since a friend of a friend had supposedly "smuggled" a VHS copy of *Wild Zero* into New York from a German film festival. The movie opens with a "live" Guitar Wolf performance, featuring animated lightning shooting out of the guitars, amps, and drum kit then across the stage and into the audience while the band performs their anthem song, "Jet Generation." Among the throbbing hoards of the crowd the camera pans in on the main character, Ace, standing relatively still in the swaying mass, his eyes transfixed on his heroes, somewhere between disbelief and awe. And I know how lucky I am to have been there, to have experienced that same moment. While right now the future of Guitar Wolf seems uncertain, it remains clear that the loss of Billy will be one that is felt not only just in the band, but also in the hearts of both punk and rock fans alike, all over the world.

2005: THE YEAR OF THE MOOSE

from *The Bennington Banner*

It's probably the biggest invasion to hit town since more than 225 years ago, when Gen. John Stark's Revolutionary War militia held off British forces eager to get their hands on supplies stashed around town. Whether the new invaders will get a monument out of it remains to be seen.

Champagne corks popped and parking lots overflowed at the Bennington County Industrial Corp. building on Water Street as a crowd, estimated at more than 600 people, packed into the former factory to see the gathering of the 57 moose that are about to be dispatched to various points in town. The colorful, gaily decorated moose are expected to provide a substantial boost to summer tourism, organizers of Moosefest 2005 say.

More than a year in the planning, the Moosefest brought together local artists who submitted designs for decorating the 6-foot-tall fiberglass bodies with businesses that sponsored individual moose.

That collaboration, along with the simple fun of the whole thing, are among the big benefits to come out of the event, said Gov. James Douglas, who toured the several galleries where the moose were on display Tuesday.

"It's a great variety of real creativity on the part of the artists. Some are more offbeat than others, but all are very attractive," he said. "It's a real boost for the town." The timing for National Tourism Week couldn't have been better, the governor went on to say, but the biggest value may be in the psychic uplift for Bennington, Douglas said.

Events like this can bring a community together, he said, and there was no question it was a major feel-good moment for those in attendance at the kick-off party. "Do you think they could pull a sap sleigh?" former state Rep. Richard "Dick" Pembroke asked the governor during his tour. Probably not very quickly, the governor said.

The original idea for the Moosefest came from a visit some local business owners paid to Brandon two years ago, when that town organized a celebration of pigs. That was followed by another festival featuring birdhouses, and this year rocking chairs are the attraction.

The Moosefest will include several spin-off events, such as a scavenger hunt and tabletop moose decorated by local schoolchildren that will be sold to support art programs in area schools. Just getting it to this point was a major feat, but one she never doubted could be done, said former chamber of commerce executive director Patti Prosowski, who recalled sitting in on the first meeting when the idea was raised.

"Originally we hoped for 40 moose," she said. "Everyone said this was a great idea—it's already a success just by bringing all these people together."

Artists who designed and decorated the moose rubbed shoulders with the business crowd, along with the simply curious, to gawk at all the unusual interpretations of moose. Foliage themes and moose with covered bridges were popular, but they shared the spotlight with an Egyptian moose that might have been found in King Tut's tomb, a carousel-themed moose, a zebra moose, and one decked out in a tuxedo and top hat from a local clothing store, among several others that pushed the boundaries of imagination. "I think it's a great event,"said Steve Love of Bennington. "What strikes me is that the artist's imaginations are all so different. They do a lot of different spins on decorating a moose."

His favorite was the motorcycle moose, he said.

The tabletop moose decorated by the schoolchildren will be first out of the box, with a display scheduled for Friday at the Stark Hose Gallery on Pleasant Street. They'll be followed by the full-sized versions on Saturday, who will stand sentry at their appointed spots for the rest of the summer.

Later this fall, a gala auction will be held to sell off the moose and bring the event to a close.

Bennington artist Mary Moore worked on two moose and wasn't sure if she was ready to do another, at least not yet. But it was definitely an experience not to be forgotten for a while, she said.

"It doesn't get any better than this," she said. "But it was an incredible amount of work."

ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF POLICE MISCONDUCT

TEMPLE, Texas

A police officer in the Central Texas town of Gatesville was one of three people arrested in connection with the September robbery of a bank.

Wesley John Friedrich, 23, was arraigned Friday afternoon. The Gatesville patrol officer was fired the same day, said Gatesville Police Chief Nathan Gohlke. Gohlke said that he was surprised "to say the least" by Friedrich's arrest.

Friedrich, an officer there since August 2004, was charged with being an accessory after the fact or knowing that the robbery occurred and assisting the alleged offenders.

GREEK ANARCHISTS CLASH WITH POLICE IN ATHENS

from anarchistnews.org

Greek anarchists released two senior politicians and scores of others early Wednesday following a standoff sparked by scuffles with the police at an Athens university.

The release came six hours after anarchists wearing black masks attacked a book-launching ceremony at the Athens Polytechnic, keeping at least 100 guests and politicians in near siege-like conditions until early Wednesday.

The hostages left the compound safely, but only after their captors, chanting anti-state slogans, were allowed to walk out freely. No arrests were made as scores of snipers and riot police were ordered to retreat from the tense scene in central Athens.

Witnesses and police officials said the anarchists were enraged on their return from a march, to protest an incident earlier this month in which a police officer shot and injured a protester during a stand-off with a student anarchist group, late Tuesday when they spotted armed security guards on campus grounds — a move forbidden by Greek law after military tanks in 1973 rammed the gates of the university to quash a student uprising against the then-ruling junta.

A senior police official contacted by phone said, "Their first reaction was to attack the security guard who was escorting one of the two politicians." "When the situation seemed to deteriorate," the police official said, "the guard fired a warning shot." [into the leg of an anarchist]

A 28-year-old male protester was shot in the foot and the security guard sustained minor head and body injuries from club-wielding anarchists. Both were rushed to state hospitals as police sent reinforcements to the scene.

The anarchists, who swiftly swelled from a group of 30 to 150, stormed the school's auditorium where an audience of 150 people was attending the book-launch ceremony.

Police said a core group set fire to trash cans and started throwing Molotov cocktails at riot police, who responded with tear gas.

Angry demonstrators faced off with police for more than one hour, damaging a dozen cars, and hurled crude firebombs at two bank branches, shattering their windows, although no one was injured in the violence.

Among the hostages were Christos Verelis, a former transport minister, and Evangelos Venizelos, a former culture minister and constitutional expert who co-wrote the country's ban on police presence at state universities.

After he was freed, Venizelos said he had negotiated an end to the crisis through "constructive dialogue."

"We had a political discussion," he said. "These are people with anger that they need to vent out."

Since the 1975 bloody student uprising, the Athens Polytechnic has become a symbol of opposition to state oppression.

In recent years, however, the school's gated grounds have become a safe haven for anarchists and militant extremists who enter the complex to escape police pursuits.

This event comes on the heels of another significant event. A month ago AP reported that a small group of self-styled anarchists went on a rampage in downtown Athens early one Sunday morning, throwing gasoline bombs (Molotov cocktails) that damaged five parked cars, authorities said. No arrests or injuries were reported.

Police said the incident in the central Athens Exarhia suburb began a little after midnight.

SCHOOL SUSPENDS BOY FOR WEARING PROM DRESS

from an article in *SFGate*

A high school senior who thought it would be funny to wear a dress to his prom was ticketed $249 for disorderly conduct, suspended for three days, and banned from his last track meet.

School district administrator Jim Gottinger said the discipline was for more than just the dress, noting Kerry Lofy, 18, was dancing in a sexually provocative manner at the prom, according to a police report.

Lofy doubts that was the real reason he was disciplined Monday.

"The whole night was that kind of dancing. They can't single me out and say, 'Oh it was you, it was only you,'" he said. "I think it's over the dress."

Lofy said Lake Geneva Badger High had no problem letting him go to Saturday's prom with another male, but that school officials drew the line at his dress.

"I thought it would be more appropriate for there to be one person dressed like a girl and a person dressed like a guy, than for there to be two guys to go," said Lofy, a member of the school's track, ski, powerlifting and soccer teams.

Also, he thought people would find it funny to see a 6-foot, 185-pound male in a black, stretchy, spaghetti-strap dress.

When Lofy showed up in the dress, a blond wig, open-toed platform sandals, blue earrings and a necklace, teachers turned him away. He said he showed up later with a tan-and-black plaid leisure suit over the dress, went inside and whipped off the suit during a dance-off. A security guard escorted him out, he said.

Lofy said when he went to school Monday, the school liaison police officer issued the disorderly conduct ticket.

"They thought I was mocking the school," he said.

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STUDENT RESISTANCE ESCALATES IN CHILE

from anarchistnews.org

Over the past weeks, Chilean high school and university students have escalated their ongoing struggle against government plans to privatize university education. A rise in the price of university student bus passes only added fuel to the fire.

Mass student demonstrations in various Chilean cities have frequently developed into street battles against riot police. Armored police water cannons are deployed by the authorities as common practice.

On numerous occasions, anarchists and other masked rebels have constructed street barricades and set them aflame outside of universities, also tossing fire and paint bombs at police and retreating onto university grounds when necessary, since the institution is considered to be a sanctuary (which police rarely violate). Rebel groups have released communiqués related to these actions, declaring that the struggle against the privatization of education is merely one front in the greater fight against capitalism and government.

On the Chilean "Day of the Police," students in the northern cities of Arica and Antofagasta engaged in particularly ferocious confrontations with the forces of order, using cars as barricades. Rebel students at Antofagasta captured a riot police helmet, played football with it and then crushed it with a rock in celebration. Eight police officers suffered significant injury.

DEATH PENALTY IN IRAQ

From *IRIN*

International human rights organisations have raised concern over the Iraqi prime ministers' recent announcement that the death penalty would be implemented as a way to control ongoing violence and insurgency in the country.

"It's true that they have been having serious security problems in the country but the death penalty certainly is not appropriate. What they are doing is just suppressing human rights in the country. We are against this decision," Middle East spokeswoman for Amnesty International (AI), Nicole Choueiry, told *IRIN* from their London headquarters.

Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari, announced on May 16 in Baghdad that the death sentence would be retained and that the new government would be prepared to use it. He added that insurgents were trying to start open warfare between Shi'ites and Sunnis.

Iraq's interim government reinstated the death penalty for crimes including murder, kidnapping, and drug running in August 2004. Al-Jaafari vowed to concentrate efforts on anyone targeting Shi'ites and Sunnis. "The new government will strike with an iron fist against any criminal who tries to harm a Sunni or a Shi'ite citizen," he said. His speech came amid an increase in violence, which has resulted in the deaths of more than 490 people since his government was formed on 28 April 2005.

Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS) officials told IRIN that the use of the death penalty was an abuse of international human rights laws. They said this should be taken into consideration when drafting the new constitution, which should promote human rights and not take them away.

A senior official at the Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR), who did not want to be named, said that the situation was very sensitive and should be dealt with carefully when drafting the new constitution. He added that the decision could trigger pressure from international humanitarian groups worldwide. The ministry has not responded to the prime ministers remarks.

The decision of whether to implement the death penalty under the new constitution has sparked reaction from some local religious leaders. Says Sheikh Omar Shaker, "No human can determine if a person can live or not. It is in the hands of God. Our community is totally against this idea and will fight it. We cannot use death to correct the insecurity. You will just be taking more lives and if charged they should pay in prison and not in graves."

YOUNG ANARCHIST KILLED BY POLICE

Mayday in Bogotá, Colombia brought a festival of music, dancing, marching and hundreds of people in the streets.

The huge demonstration which included union workers, farmers, students, unemployed people and activists, marched in a non-violent manner on one of the main streets of Bogotá. The demonstration not only remembered those who were killed by the State in Chicago in 1886, but also denounced the current precarious economical and social conditions of Colombia, demanded a halt to the Free Trade Treatise and made public the atrocities that are being committed by the current fascist government.

The excited and peaceful crowd made its way through the streets of downtown Bogotá with ease until they came to a major intersection. Upon approach they were met with a barrage of tear gas, rubber bullets and riot police.

As individual protestors were singled out, witnesses say that eight officers focused their efforts on fifteen-year old Nicolás David Neira Alvares. Despite attempts at intervention by those around him, David was beaten to unconsciousness. The police left his body on the ground in the street. He was scooped up by comrades and taken to the hospital.

He suffered blunt force head trauma and minor contusions to his body. The state of his head was so severe and unstable that he could not be operated on immediately.

He died later that day.

THE SCIENCE OF STAR WARS

from *Forbes*

In an effort to destroy everyone's childhood dreams, the array of deadly weapons and ultra cool technology seen in *Star Wars* was reviewed and the plausibility of each assessed.

Light sabers. That's impossible!

"Hokey religions and ancient weapons are no match for a good blaster at your side," Han Solo told Luke Skywalker in the 1977 Star Wars. He was right—not least because light sabers like the famous laser sword Skywalker wielded, would never work.

Laser beams are made of light, and they continue until they hit something. They cannot be fashioned into sword blades a mere two feet long. A bigger problem: Swords made of light would pass right through one another. Instead of having a swordfight, they would slice each other immediately in half.

In fact, the photon, or light particle, is renowned in quantum physics for its standoffish refusal to interact with anything. MIT's Frank Wilczek, a 2004 Nobel Laureate in Physics, has joked that instead of photons, perhaps light sabers are made of gluons—quantum particles that stick together with ease. These would not pass through one another, although they might explode.

"The combination of medieval chivalry and modern lethal technology is pretty ridiculous," says Wilczek. "In real history, gunpowder—or even good crossbows—pretty much put knights out of business."

Hyperdrive. Highly unlikely.

When Han Solo wanted to fly his spaceship to a distant part of the galaxy, he didn't push his engines to try and get close to the speed of light. Instead, he engaged a nifty gizmo called a hyperdrive, which made the stars streak by like scenery outside a train window.

Without such a device, interstellar travel would be arduous and boring. In 1994, Miguel Alcubierra, then a physicist at the University of Wales, proposed a way in which a hyperdrive could actually be built, without violating the rules of Einstein's general theory of relativity.

A giant mass would be dangled in front of the spaceship, pulling it forward. Then, a "negative mass," an area that weighs even less than empty space, would be placed behind the craft. Space would be warped by the intense gravity so that the spacecraft could move almost instantly from place to place.

Unfortunately, says Ken Olum, a professor at the Tufts Center for Cosmology, problems crop up immediately. First, he argues, the space warp would have to be made before the ship—meaning that a pre-existing passageway, like a subway, would be possible. But a vessel that goes where no one has gone before would not.

Then there's the problem of "negative mass," stuff that's emptier than empty space. That's slightly more possible than it sounds. Scientists have created experimental setups that show such negative mass is possible to create in small quantities. But the amount of mass and energy needed to do so probably preclude ever moving a spaceship. Even if enough negative mass could be made, Olum says, it probably couldn't be set up in a way that would allow hyperspace travel.

Bionic Limbs. Already here.

In Star Wars, limbs lopped off by light sabers are easily replaced with robotic parts.

Luke Skywalker's hand was replaced with a robotic appendage at the end of *The Empire Strikes Back*, and Darth Vader was, in the words of Obi-Wan Kenobi, "more machine than man." His legs and arms were robotic.

As far-out as they may sound, robotic replacement limbs are actually tantalizingly close. Hugh Herr at the MIT Media Laboratory for instance, developed a robotic knee and lower leg that allows patients to walk almost normally and even rollerblade. Herr's devices are being tested at Brown University under a $7.2 million grant from the Department of Veterans Affairs. Thanks to a chip that reads nerve signals sent to the muscles that remain, the new robotic leg even climbs stairs. A commercial version of the knee, called the Rheo Knee, made by Iceland's Ossur Therapeutics, hit the U.S. market on Feb. 1.

Other researchers are working on ways to connect robotic limbs directly to patients' brains. The first steps have been taken, at least with primates. Miguel Nicolelis, a researcher at Duke University, trained monkeys to operate a robotic arm using a chip in their brain without moving a muscle.

Holographic Messages. Improbable.

In a galaxy far, far away, they didn't use telephones or email. Instead, messages tended to be sent by 3-D holographic projections. A holographic distress call sent by Princess Leia started off the first Star Wars movie, and Darth Vader used the holo-phone to call the emperor.

Three-dimensional displays are a real possibility, says Michael Halle, a researcher in Harvard Medical School's radiology department. But the kinds of holograms used in the movie are impossible, because they were projected into space. Every type of hologram that currently exists is bound to a flat surface, like a plate of glass or a screen.

The screen could be behind the hologram or in front of it, but it would have to be there. The problem is the same as the one with light sabers: Photons, or light particles, tend to do pretty much as they please. "Many lay people assume that given enough time, any scientific accomplishment is possible," writes Halle. "But the universe as we know it would be very, very different if photons could be steered around without passing through an optical element or huge gravitational source of some kind."

A 3-D image, either a hologram or some other kind of 3-D screen, would be possible, although so far "holographic movies" have yet to really materialize.

Clones. Possible.

The original Star Wars movie made nebulous references to "the Clone Wars," relying on a sci-fi trope, which said that someday it would be possible to Xerox people. But when George Lucas finally got around to explaining what the Clone Wars were in the 2002 *Attack of the Clones*, he settled on a somewhat realistic scenario.

Cloning has been a hot topic in recent years. Researchers have talked about the potential to create stem cells through cloning in order to treat disease. Some groups, like the Raelian religious movement and the Kentucky in vitro fertilization expert, Panos Zavos, have even talked about cloning infants to the widespread horror of the scientific community.

As of yet, no human infant has been cloned, but the cloning process, which involves injecting genetic material into an egg cell, has worked in other mammals such as sheep, mice and cats. Recently, researchers in South Korea dramatically increased the efficiency of cloning human embryos. In Attack of the Clones, the clones are all cloned from a single person and then given some time to grow to full size.

The major barrier here would seem to be creating a technological replacement for the mother's womb. (All animal clones have been brought to term in living mothers.) But doctors have become better at taking care of increasingly premature infants, and it's not inconceivable that someday the whole developmental process could take place outside a mother's body.

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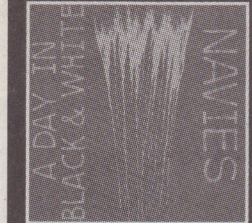
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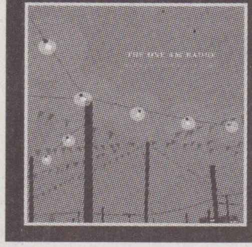

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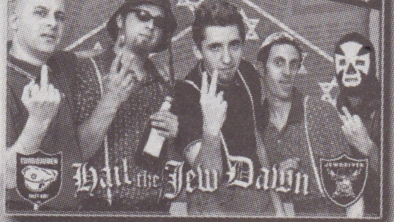
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SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Hey what's up everyone? My name is Chad Stroup and I'm a recent addition to the *over 30* club. I've been into punk rock for a little over half my life now and have been pretty dedicated to supporting the local scene here for that time. San Diego has had its ups and downs over the years, but we certainly have had our fair share of great bands. Currently I think we have the biggest and best selection of local hardcore punk bands in well over a decade. What better time for me to compile a scene report? Okay, I may as well cut to the chase and get started with this craziness.

BANDS:

Allow me to begin with the band I would crown with the title of "My Favorite Current Local Band"—SAFE INSIDE. They haven't been around too terribly long but they've managed to bore into my brain pretty quickly with their intense racket. SAFE INSIDE has released a demo and a 14 song seven-inch on Black Matter records (www.blackmatterrecords.com). As you can tell by the number of songs on their record, they don't fuck around too much time-wise. Musically they remind me a bit of *You Are the Victim*-era RAW POWER (especially the killer guitar tones) mixed with a little bit of DAS OATH. The vocal style is more screechy and throat shredding, along the lines of CONVERGE or later RORSCHACH. Allegedly they are working on some new material but in the meantime don't sleep on their raging seven-inch and you can contact them at Safeinside@sbcglobal.net.

LAST PRIEST is quickly making a name in the local scene. Featuring the core members of FIND HIM AND KILL HIM, so you know you're dealing with some intense noise damage here. LAST PRIEST has chosen to go more of a mid-tempo route musically instead of the hyper fast stuff FHAKH were doing. They don't really sound too much like any single band but I suppose you could say, at times, that they are modernizing the classic BLACK FLAG sound and adding their own stamp to it. They have released a demo tape and a seven-inch/CD on Old Guard Records (formerly Takeover Records) and will be working on a full length possibly to be released later this year. Check the website: www.lastpriest.com for information on their west coast tour this summer and you can e-mail them at booking@lastpriest.com.

Matt, the guitarist from LAST PRIEST, also plays drums in a fucking wild band called CRIME DESIRE. They are self-described *raging skronk punk* and have been around for two years now. Comparisons are often made to SIEGE, NEOS, and BL'AST. I'd also add that the vocals are somewhat reminiscent of THE CRUCIFUCKS. Definitely not an easy lis-

tening band by any stretch, but will reward the ears of the adventurous listener. They have a self-released 12" ltd to 500 copies entitled *We Hate All Life* on Life's A Rape (available for $10 ppd. in US/$12 ppd. in North America/$18 ppd. world from M.Colin Tappe/P.O. Box 278/Carlsbad, CA 92018), and they are planning on releasing their sophomore release *Id Music To Combat The Superego* sometime this summer. Also being planned is a US tour in August. If you want to help these crazies out with a show or contact them for some general info, email colinrrmf@yahoo.com or send a letter to the Life's a Rape address.

Hopefully people have heard of BÜMBKLÄÄTT by now. They have been kicking around for a few years and have a few releases under their belt (seven-inch and CD on Slaves to Darkness, seven-inch and ten-inch on Despotic). Half of this band actually lives in Tijuana, Mexico, but the other half is firmly planted in San Diego. They are a big part of the scene so they definitely deserve to be mentioned. Fans of bands like TOTALITÄR, TRAGEDY, and the like will also love to pummel themselves to the sounds of BÜMBKLÄÄT, though this band is definitely doing some unique stuff with this style and are far from amateurs. I couldn't get ahold of these guys for any current info but I imagine they are probably working on some amazing new material. Check out their website at www.BÜMBKLÄÄT.com.

Speaking of BÜMBKLÄÄT, members of this band were once in the legendary (at least around here) RUN FOR YOUR FUCKING LIFE, and they recently played a reunion show when FUCKED UP came through town. These guys are easily one of the most raging bands to ever grace our city so it was awesome to see them play again after a few years. Rumor has it that Jeff, their drummer, will be flying out here every few months or so to work on some new material and play more shows. Let's hope this is more than just a rumor. If you somehow managed to not pick up their LP on Gloom Records released a few years back I'll forgive you as long as you promise to track it down soon. If you want an unmatchable dosage of bitter and angry hardcore punk that lies somewhere between POISON IDEA and ECONOCHRIST than look no further.

One of the newest bands to hit the scene is ALL THE WASTE I SEE from Chula Vista. They have been compared to early AMENITY—they actually took their name from a lyric by this classic band—and other early Northern California punk. These kids have only played a handful of shows but they should finally have a demo out by the time this is printed so contact them for it (mark_ass_busta@yahoo.com or 633 Via Curvada Chula Vista, CA 91910).

I sing for a band called SBV (aka SILENT BUT VIOLENT). So far we have released a demo tape, a self-released split seven-inch with Fresno's FEELIN' FINE (almost out of print), and an eight song seven-inch on Parts Unknown Records (www.partsunknownrecords.com). We also have three newer songs to be released on the upcoming third volume of *Histeria*, which should be out sometime this year. People have compared us to UNIFORM CHOICE, 7 SECONDS, and LIFE SENTENCE, though the lyrical style is more sarcastic and critical a la SNFU. We have had line-up problems for the past year or so due to losing two members to the *people stealer* of the Bay Area. This has caused our frequency of live appearances to be lower than usual. We have just recently started playing with a new bassist and drummer so it looks like there will be some good shows and new songs to work on this summer (xsepticedgex@cox.net or 4419 Louisiana St. #3 San Diego, CA 92116).

LIFE CRISIS has been ripping it up for a couple of years now. Made up of guys older than most of the scene around here, it makes sense that their influences would go way back. You could probably compare them to MDC, CODE OF HONOR, or any other straight up, No Labels, 80s

BÜMBKLÄÄT

styled hardcore punk band. They are also graced with probably the best drummer of any current local band-the dude fucking rips. LIFE CRISIS has released a demo and a seven-inch entitled *Unpeaceful Protest* on Get Revenge Records (www.getrevengerecords.com). Check the website: www.life_crisis.net and e-mail Sean at getrevenge@gmail.com for any further info.

Also on the same label and sharing one member is CHRISTIAN CLUB. These shredders just released a cool seven-inch influenced by old Midwest HC like NECROS or THE FIX. As you can probably gather by their name, CHRISTIAN CLUB has a very extreme anti-religious agenda. You can contact them at Sean's email printed above. It looks like Get Revenge Records has a lot of cool stuff lined up for the future so check out this killer new label.

The one and only metal band I'll mention here is UNTIL THE FALL. These guys totally rip it up and are definitely a part of the local hardcore scene. Their sound is a mix of SLAYER and *Crossover*-era DRI. Now when I say they sound like SLAYER this is no idle comment. They really do sound *a lot* like them. From the vocal style to the song structures they definitely wear their influences on their sleeves. Their lyrics, however, are not typical metal nonsense. You can tell they are on the same level as the punks with their more personal/political slant to the words being screamed. For those who care they also perform an AT THE GATES cover live, which totally kills. They have a split CD with COUNTLESS SHADOWS, released by High Fidelity Records (www.highfidelityrecords.com), and they've begun work on a full-length CD. Apparently they will be playing some scattered weekend west coast dates this summer so check them out if you like to bang your head (triggerpullit@yahoo.com).

The guitarist and drummer of UNTIL THE FALL were also in a killer hardcore band called YOU'RE NEXT, who unfortunately broke up late last year. They left behind a seven-inch of unique and complex hardcore (also released on High Fidelity Records) that you should seek out. Fans of anything from old Nardcore, to late 80s hardcore, to modern, slightly metallic-core (of the non-mosh metal variety) will likely find worth in this record.

If you've never heard of BATTALION OF SAINTS, you probably shouldn't be reading this scene report. Easily the most classic band to come to mind when one thinks of early San Diego punk, the BATS played a few "reunions" in the last couple of years. Because most of the original members are deceased, George, the vocalist, had to recruit some ex-HEROIN and CLIKITAT IKATOWI alumni, among others to play with this revamped line-up. They put on a great tight show but I have not heard if they are going to continue with this line-up and/or record any new material.

A couple of better-known local bands that I really dig on and endorse are SOME GIRLS and THE PLOT TO BLOW UP THE EIFFEL TOWER. SOME GIRLS recently inked a deal with Epitaph and THE PLOT has a new album on Revelation Records so it shouldn't be too hard to track down their releases. They also receive tons of press in other zines so it should be relatively easy to find more information on these bands. I just wanted to give my personal thumbs up to these folks. They're recommended only if you have an open mind and are not looking for traditional, straightforward punk.

I'm sure I've forgotten a few bands but I'm old and my memory began failing me quite some time ago. Also I can't hog up the entire scene report section right? Sorry to anyone I missed…

RAMONES
shall

SAFE INSIDE

VENUES/RECORD STORES/GOOD EATS:

a The Che Café is still going strong after about give or take 20 years. It has been the only consistent space for all ages, DIY punk shows in San Diego during that time, which makes it semi-legendary I suppose. Truthfully, there are no other current local venues worth mentioning, because they are either bars or big rock clubs that pander to bands not typically covered in this zine. The Che also usually serves decent vegan food during shows, which rules. They used to provide food for the bands, but I'm pretty sure that nowadays they aren't able to do that but offer a discount. Don't quote me on that though. It's an all-volunteer run venue and the people who book the shows also work in the kitchen and watch the door, but are not paid, so it's a good idea to be extra appreciative of them. If you are on tour and are looking to book a show in San Diego this is the place to do it. They have a rotating cast of characters who book the shows so it's best to check the website (www.checafe.ucsd.edu/) and email them to find out who would be the best person to do a show for you based on the style of music you play.

Record stores in San Diego are, unfortunately, not so hot right now. The best one is probably Lou's Records in Encinitas (434 N Coast Highway 101). They have two separate buildings next to each other—one each for used and new stuff. Their CD selection is pretty good all around and the vinyl section is usually no slouch either.

Off the Record (3849 5th Ave. in Hillcrest) used to be a pretty awesome store. Currently it seems rare that they get any new HC/punk releases in, not even the really big names. It might be worth checking out if you are from out of town but it's tiring to go there almost every week and leave empty handed. Hopefully they'll get their shit together and hire someone to do some decent buying.

Located only a short stroll from Off the Record is Record City (3757 6th Ave). I don't often find much there either, but the occasional gem does pop up. Again, worth checking out if you aren't used to going there all of the time.

Needless to say, most of my recent record shopping has been out of town, at shows, or through mail order these days. Oh well…

Okay now we're moving onward to the "good eats" section. I can't list every decent restaurant in San Diego but I'm going to mention a few of my favorites (all of which are vegetarian/vegan friendly). The first is a recent addition to our fine city and it is called Kung Food (2949 5th Ave., Hillcrest). This place is 100% vegan and they have a ton of stuff to choose from. Everything from pancakes to chicken potpie to soft serve ice cream to lasagna. It's served cafeteria style and sold by the pound, so if you happen to not be terribly hungry you can still get away with a pretty cheap meal. I'm a pretty big eater myself and I'm usually able to get pretty damned full for around $8.00 worth of food at this place so it will not rape your wallet too much.

Sipz is also relatively new to San Diego and they serve some awesome food. Located at 5501 Clairemont Mesa Blvd. in Kearny Mesa is this great Chinese veggie restaurant (only about two or three menu items are not vegan). There are quite a few different menu variations to choose from. I highly recommend the crispy chicken with basil or the Pad Thai.

Of course there's no way I can go without mentioning a Mexican restaurant in San Diego. Considering burritos make up about 75% of my diet I could easily use this entire report talking about places to find good burritos. Instead I'll just mention my personal favorite (which also happens to be an extremely popular spot to eat in general). Pokez can be found on the corner of 10th Ave and E St. in downtown San Diego. It's not an exclusively vegetarian restaurant, but they have a huge selection of veggie/vegan meals on their menu. I'm a big fan of the potato flautas and vegan chorizo burrito. Touring bands pretty much love Pokez as a rule. You can get a giant burrito for under $5.00 and it'll pretty much fill you up for lunch *and* dinner.

So that's about all I have to mention about our small, but great scene in San Diego. Come visit us in the summer (or any season for that matter) and you'll most likely want to move here not only for the weather, but also for the awesome music scene and everything that surrounds us. Now, tell me more about *your* scene!

FREE MUMIA!
FREE MUMIA!
YOU'RE NEXT!

EUGENE, OREGON

These two bands from Eugene, OR play shows together, tour together, and they put out a split LP, so it made sense to interview them together in the context of a scene report. Eugene has a unique scene, one that's suffered a couple knockout punches, but bands like HUMAN CERTAINTY and HAPPY BASTARDS are helping us stagger back to our feet. Interviewed in December 2004 by Ryan Mishap.

HAPPY BASTARDS
Christy: guitar
Saxon: bass, backing vocals
Sean: drums, backing vocals
Shade: guitar

HUMAN CERTAINTY
Will: guitar, vocals
Jason: drums, vocals
Aaron: bass
Robin: guitar

MRR: Could you describe your music? And why did you decided to form a band?
Christy: Our music is definitely punk rock with, I think, rocked out solos. A little bit of crazy, schizophrenic parts here and there. Melodies, I think.
Saxon: Why do people normally do bands? Probably for the same reason everyone else does.

MRR: Money, fame, power…
Saxon: Absolutely. They formed it for me, you know, maybe give a fella a little hope.
Will: HUMAN CERTAINTY started because Jason, Caleb and I were playing in FUCK GOD IN THE FACE and a couple of those guys decided they didn't want to play in that band anymore. So we started this band and Caleb ended up leaving and we added Aaron and Robin. As far as describing what we do, gosh, I don't know.
Robin: We pretend like hell not to be a metal band. Play crazy death-metal and scream and yell, then swear up and down that we have nothing to do with that genre.
Will: Jason and I really grew up on punk rock and that's the foundation for what we do, that early SST stuff. Obviously, we like metal too.

MRR: Is being political important? How do you define that?
Saxon: That's a tough one, I mean, as everyone says, "The personal is political." We do DIY shows. We think it is very important to get the local scene involved and keep things going. I mean, Eugene, Oregon, had a really cool scene years ago. Speaking of some of the other bands, that's why they moved to Eugene, because they'd play shows here and had such a good turnout. Kind of a lack of it since then, but it was beautiful a while ago and hopefully we can get it up and going again.

HAPPY BASTARDS

Will: I don't really feel comfortable taking a strong political stance through the band. I guess our lyrics could be construed to be political in some sense. I am not opposed to bands that have a more political basis, but the things I include in the band are more related to morality and individualism.

Robin: Human hatred.

Will: I'm down with the whole punk rock politics, for lack of a better term: DIY, all-ages shows, self-reliance and self-sufficiency, but I wouldn't consider us a political band.

Robin: Everybody in this band, and I would assume in HAPPY BASTARDS, we've all been seeing people in bands and people in hardcore taking themselves way too seriously. Doing good work but being pricks about it. After you see that for so long, and see people speaking for you and telling you what you think and ostracizing you if you don't think a certain way… Even if the things that they are going for are noble causes, the attitudes in punk rock have really become too intense for people who are actually thinking and progressing through their lives. We all have shit that we go for to make ourselves better people and keep our world how we like it, but we're all real squeamish about the term "political band" because we've seen people misuse that so much.

Saxon: I'm involved in other political things besides the band. I've ended up in prison and all that kind of stuff. But, the HAPPY BASTARDS is a political band.

Christy: I don't like being preached to and I certainly don't want to do that to anyone else. So I don't think to get up there and get on a podium and tell people how they should live or what they should think is the right way to get across to people if you are wanting to give them a message.

Will: I guess that kinds of sums it up, I don't feel comfortable saying I know better than you and I can tell you what's better for your life than what you think is better for your life, what's right and what's wrong, just because I'm in front of a microphone or have a guitar in my hands.

MRR: So it would be more sharing your experiences, sharing what you think.

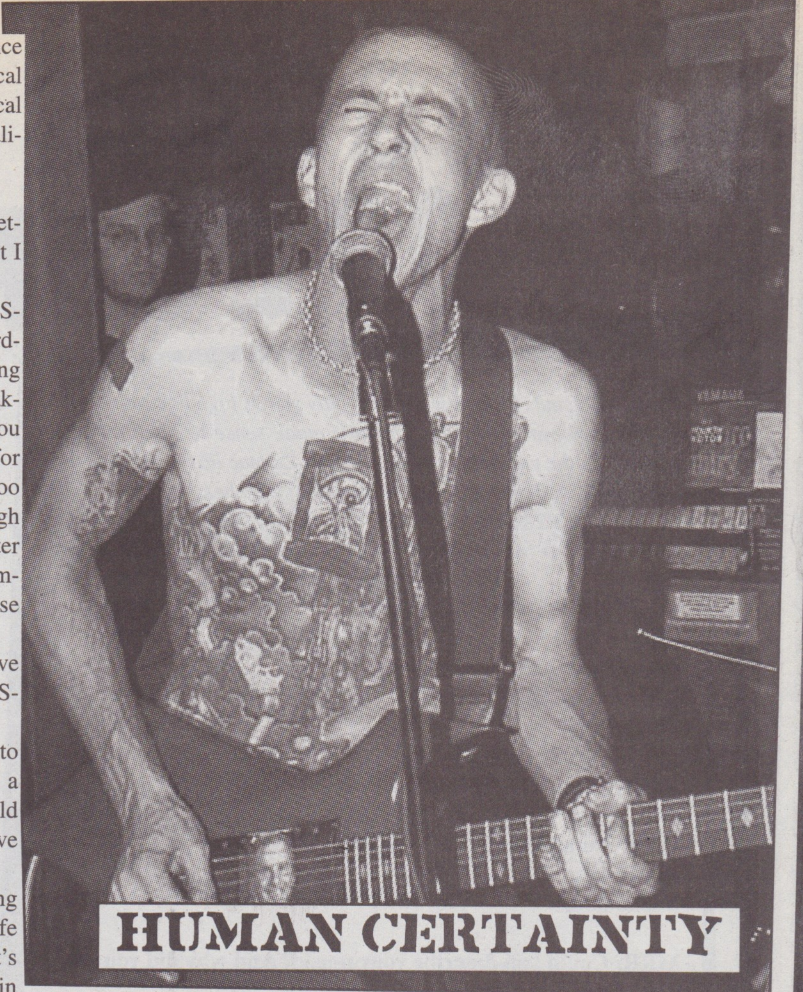
Robin: Sure, sure. Absolutely. You can be very political just by telling people where you've been. Just having a real open dialogue with room for criticism and with room for compliment regarding politics. You can talk some shit about politics and still love it. You can reevaluate your opinions, you can change your mind, you can waffle like hell, and you can still be a political person. I think there's not a lot of room for that sort of behavior in official punk rock. People aren't supposed to do that. You get accused of selling out or you get accused of not toeing the party line. Which is super unpleasant for such a free-thinking culture to do to itself.

Christy: Just as far as the lyrics I write, I try to touch on everyday life experiences. If you want to call that personal politics, you can certainly do that. It is more about human nature and how we interact with each other, trying to touch that. If that can get across to somebody listening to it and they understand, that's great. If it can make them maybe expand on what I'm saying that's awesome.

Saxon: I've been in the anarchist scene since the mid-80s. I've seen people practicing mutual aid and putting on punk shows even without being political. I was in rural Maine and it was much more egalitarian and cooperative than the average anarchist event.

MRR: I was going to ask what punk meant to you. I feel like we answered some of that, actually.

Will: Punk is very important to me. I didn't stress that so much in



HUMAN CERTAINTY

"I think this is a great place to live and try to start something back up again. There aren't nearly as many jaded and bitter people here as there are in other places."

everything I was saying. It has been a major part of my life; as disgusted as I get with it sometimes, it's a driving force in my life.

Robin: I'll make it quick: I've made almost every friend I know through punk rock.

Saxon: I think, again, that's why people get so disgusted—because it is so important to us. It's like some local so-called punk rockers in San Bernardino didn't want to play with us because we have a female singer.

Christy: They said that women had no place in punk rock. Which is laughable, an oxymoron. I have no idea what that means even.

Saxon: Yeah, again, when punk rock started—where would we be without X-Ray Spex, Slits, Penetration, all the big bands like that? And bands in the 80s like Lost Cherrees, Crass and Poison Girls.

Christy: Yes, I love it when people hate me for my gender!

MRR: How does living in a town that's 90% white affect the punk scene?

Will: I don't know how much that really effects things. I mean, punk rock goes by demographics a lot of ways. You're somewhere there's a large Hispanic population, for example, there's going to be more Latino people involved. Punk rock tends to be proportionate to its surroundings. There's just so many outcasts and fuck-ups from each racial group, or however you'd like to categorize people.

Robin: All growing up, I lived in a town in California that was maybe 95% white. We were all white in that town. It's still a northern California town that nobody goes to unless they're white. I never even noticed growing up, because although I didn't live in a racist community, there just weren't people of color anywhere. So, I never learned to hate anyone. Nobody around me ever instilled any values of hatred in me, but I don't really know anything about any other cultures. Which is my biggest hang-up because I don't know how to relate to people who aren't white. Moving up to Eugene has been the same thing. I still don't speak Spanish and, for a year, I lived in a neighborhood that was half Mexican. I think that I could definitely be working a lot harder on that.

Saxon: That's the culture of the Pacific Northwest. Punk scenes thrive on a diversity of ideas. We play shows and it's predominately white. We play with bands and they're predominately male. There's really few bands—white males seems to be the only people we play with up here. It's a tragedy for the whole scene.

Sean: I'm afraid of white people in Eugene.

Robin: Sean is afraid a lot of the time.

Will: Where I grew up in California, it was at least half Hispanic. I grew up by a military base. There were a lot of Asian folks and black folks. Even the punk scene down there was predominately white. For whatever reason—I don't know if those folks weren't interested or it didn't have anything to offer them, or they felt like they weren't welcome. I don't know. It is weird about Eugene though. I never spent any time here before I moved here. It is a white community.

Saxon: I get an interesting perspective because I didn't grow up in America. I hang out with other guys who come through town, like Rudy from the Toasters and Steve from Black Uhuru, and they pretty much had the same perspective that I had growing up in London. America is a very racist country. Malcolm X pointed out that the first thing they teach you in America is not who you are, but the color of your skin. It is different growing up in the rest of the world, it seems. Where I grew up it was about football; my mom was a skinhead back in the 60s and she grew up where the color of your skin made no difference. In Eugene we miss out on that sort of thing.

Robin: It kind of sounds like we're limiting our ability to mix with other cultures to punk rock, but I think that's one-dimensional in the whole perception of things. Our neighborhoods are mixed now. There are many languages being spoken in Eugene that we could be learning. There are just so many ways we could be hanging out with different people. I don't blame people for not wanting to hang out in punk rock if they go to a show and everybody they see is white and nobody talks to them. If I go to a show, I don't care if everybody's white, but if no one talks to me, I'm probably not going to go to another one of those shows. I've found that punk rockers are really unfriendly around here and that's like step one in making any kind of difference.

HANK WILLIA

HAPPY BASTARDS

Will: It's like that in a lot of places.

Saxon: The so-called political scene has made people paranoid to outsiders. There's a certain xenophobia that doesn't have to do with the color of your skin or anything, but anyone outside the scene.

Will: You're not cool enough. How you're fucking dressed, or so much stupid shit.

MRR: Which leads into what's good and bad about Eugene.

Robin: I love it here.

Will: I really love it here too. As much bad things as I have to say about it there's some really good people in this town. I can't complain too much about Eugene.

Christy: I really like Eugene. I've only been here a little over two years. Where I came from the scene was comparable to a ghost town. I come here, I hear it is after the heyday, but there's something different about Eugene… I think there is still hope. There's still a lot of young kids that are interested in their home scene. It's the ebb and flow. It certainly dies out, but I think it is coming back around again. I think people care. I think this is a great place to live and try to start something back up again. There aren't nearly as many jaded and bitter people here as there are in other places.

Unknown: Except for all of us!

Robin: It's funny, Will and I were talking at practice last night about getting in trouble with this interview because we all feel that we're pretty jaded. But so far we don't seem so jaded.

Will: I guess we're not as jaded as we thought we were. We have some more hope.

Saxon: You can look at reality and still do what you want to do.

Robin: You can look at reality and take it any way you want. You can give up hope and shoot yourself in the face. Or you can start a rad band and make do with the things that you have. Which is maybe why we sing about such violent things because we're trying to save ourselves from that. I don't want to be depressed. I want to scream and yell and get it all out and fall down for a little bit and be fine for the rest of my life. Be able to do what I want. Personally, for me, that's what hardcore is about; exorcising all that shitty energy from the environment we live in and being able to concentrate on progressing. Yoga with guitars or something.

MRR: On the HUMAN CERTAINTY side of the split LP there's a song called "The Scarlet Letter." I want to ask what that's about.

Will: It's about a lot of things that happened in town and how easily some people labeled others some sort of "-ist" or "-ism," basically trying to excommunicate them from the community. I think that's really disgusting. A lot of people jumped on the bandwagon: "So and so said this, so and so said that which means they're like this!" Just jumping on the bandwagon and wanting to persecute that person and never finding out the truth. There's two sides to every story. I mean, people have done fucked up things in this town that have become big public scandals, but with some people, things just got blown out of proportion. It happens anywhere but just watching that happen hurt.

MRR: If I hadn't known HUMAN CERTAINTY was from Eugene, I would have thought [about the lyrics], "that's just like some of the Eugene political scene!" [*Laughter*]

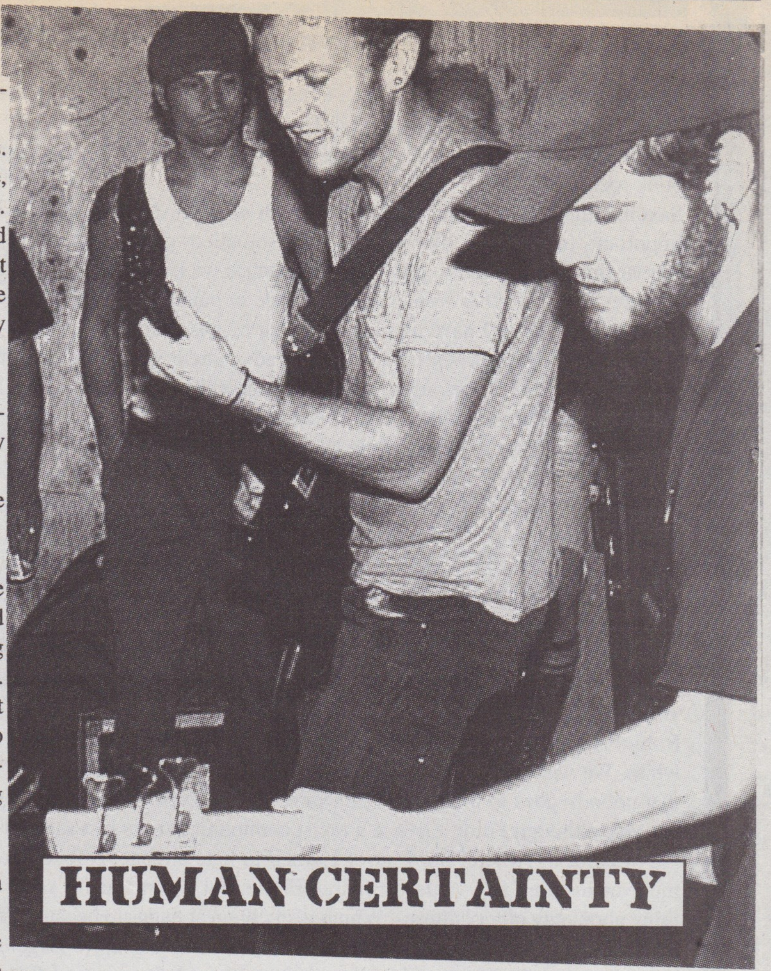
Will: Well, people are so eager in this town to do that. I don't want to press the point, but some people…

Tracy: I can't believe you said that! I have to call everybody I ever knew! [Laughter] Mine and Ryan's joke.

Will: Some people in the activist community, in particular, and in certain neighborhoods, they put up fucking flyers saying horrendous things about people that are going to stick with you no matter whether they are true or not. People aren't even interested in hearing the second side to the story. They'll excommunicate you, you can't be a part of it. You're fucked. You've been branded. These people are the all-seeing, all-knowing people and their judgement can not be questioned.

MRR: The HAPPY BASTARDS have a song called "Right Fighter" and the lyrics seem similar. Tell me about that one.

Christy: That one is very comparable. It came from an actual situation that occurred—that went on for months—where I personally would speak to a person and everything I said was wrong, even if we were in agreement with something. Damned if you do or if you don't.



HUMAN CERTAINTY

Robin: That's a real uncomfortable environment for young punks to try to get into. That could be a big part of what's holding us back, if they see all the old kids fighting all the time and not talking to each other. That's not attractive.

MRR: OK, slight gear-shift. There seems to me, admittedly an outsider, to be a connection amongst bands in the Eugene music scene, a mutual support that crosses genres. Is this true?

Will: There's some awesome folks in Eugene. Like DEKE FALCON, who are nothing like us, or ON THE FIRST DAY…THEY WERE KITTENS or YOB. There's folks that are into the network where it isn't so much the music you play, it is more like an ideology and just support.

Christy: I think, what's really nice—like I was saying earlier about hope for Eugene—is that everyone that is in a band seems to be very conscious of supporting each other. It does cross lines and musical styles and tastes. I think that we're all there for each other, which is slightly uncommon in some places.

Saxon: It's about people really enjoying playing their music. There's this band that recently got back together, DIRT CLOD FIGHT, they're old men and stuff, but they put on a good show. I hope all the young activists have that energy in the next five years or so.

Sean: And DIRT CLOD FIGHT has one of the best live sounds I've ever heard.

MRR: There seems to be a lack of DIY/political punk in Eugene—more than just the music. Am I missing something?

Robin: I think people are being much less obvious about it, but I still think there are people with strong political beliefs making

beautiful music in this town. I don't think we're the only two bands shying away from those labels. Maybe that era of the scene has sort of died. We can still be political bands, but we're not going to do it with the same aesthetic value as the bands did before. If we don't sing about a certain set of political ideas and if we don't hold a certain set of beliefs—that doesn't mean we don't have incredibly strong values. Just because we don't express them in the old ways doesn't mean they aren't present in how we live.
Will: Speaking for HUMAN CERTAINTY, we're four individuals and we have four different sets of ethics and beliefs. There's a lot of things we agree on but there's some we disagree on. That's fine. I don't want to hang out with a bunch of people just like me. What kind of life is that to lead?

MRR: Where are all the zines in town? This is a correlation to the "more than music" question.
Will: Your zine is the only zine I've seen in the last, Christ, I think since AHISMA's last show. There was the *Unscene* for a while, but there were a lot of things I didn't like about it. But, they were doing it and that's cool as fuck. I don't do one.
Robin: I've made a couple of small zines that I didn't do large runs of, that were just writings. I didn't really go to the political realm, but they were zines. Zine culture is just something that exists without the boundaries of content. I've noticed that zines can be about whatever the hell they want to be about.
Will: From day one, you don't have to play in a fucking band to be involved with the punk rock scene beyond just going to shows and buying records. There are zines, people who put out records and do the flyers…
Robin: You can just go to tons of shows. You can be a really important part of the punk scene, especially here, where not a lot of people do [go to shows].

MRR: Or you can hole up in your house and listen to your records—never mind!
Will: People get this conception that playing in a band is the best way you can contribute to punk rock. That's fucking bullshit. It's what I do, but not what everybody else does. So what if you're in a band? That doesn't make you more important than anyone else. People get that whole idea in their head: you're in a band, you're talking into the microphone, you must have something important to say. What about the kid who writes a zine, doesn't leave his house and listens to records?
Christy: I haven't been here that long, but I have found, in the short time I've been here, that it was like "who's the coolest anarchist—I'm more anarchist than you." Or, "I'm more punk rock than you." Instead of there being a support for people putting out zines and accepting different points of view. It's more—you're all wrong. Like the whole thing from "Right Fighters" earlier, if you don't completely click with everything I'm saying… It seems like if anybody broke the mold and tried to do their own thing and make a zine to put out there, it was shot down immediately by some big bullies that have been in this town. Maybe, I don't know, that could be a reason there aren't so many zines now.
Sean: I was reading through the latest *Profane Existence* and noticed there were five reviews of zines from Eugene, and that shocked me.

MRR: Three were mine, Sean!
Sean: But the other two were other folks'.

MRR: Portland is *huge* with zines. If you went downtown and shot a handgun, you would hit a zinester.
Sean: I think everybody that does an Internet blog should make it a zine.

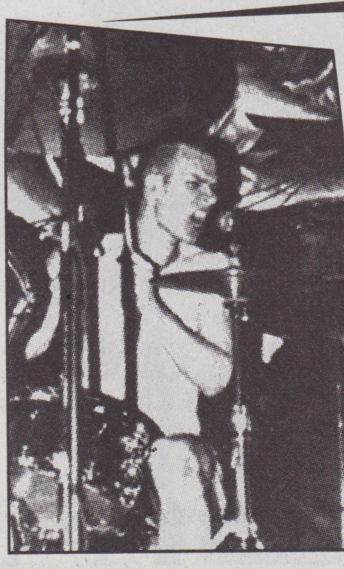
MRR: Gosh, we're almost done. [I asked about benefit shows and all agreed they were fun and easy—if you're local and like playing, why not? Playing with touring bands is like a benefit show anyways, not taking money so the out-of-town folks get it.]

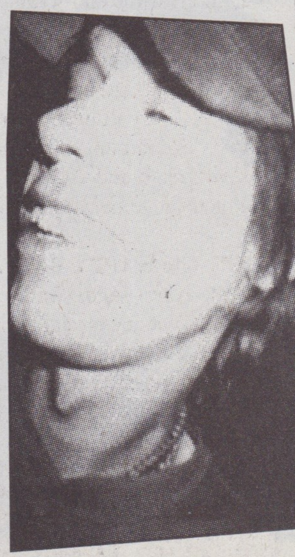
MRR: What should have I asked? It's also a way of saying: any last words?
Will: For the HUMAN CERTAINTY side of things, this is only two people representing a group of four individuals.
Christy: I think a good question is why did you want to interview us?

MRR: We talked about it earlier: supporting your scene, getting to know the people in it and sharing what we got goin' on.
Robin: To summarize, if this interview can be anything for people who are in bands, who are traveling on the west coast, there are really people in Eugene who care. And having been a lot of places on our tour where people didn't put out a lot of effort, people here really do. We love good music and support it.

MRR: What's in the immediate future?
Saxon: There is no future!
Will: What British person couldn't throw a Sex Pistols reference in there?
Christy: Thanks for letting us talk about ourselves for an hour.

If you would like to purchase a HAPPY BASTARDS/ HUMANCERAINTY split LP you can order one at http://www.freewebs.com/nfnrecords for the low price of $9.00 post paid in the US (otherwise add $2.00). The LP is also available through Profane Existence, Hardcore Holocaust, Alternative Tentacles, Crimes Against Humanity and Sound Idea. You can contact the bands at: www.freewebs.com/humancertainty, www.freewebs.com/happybastards, or by snail mail at NFN Records , PO Box 10384, Eugene, OR 97440





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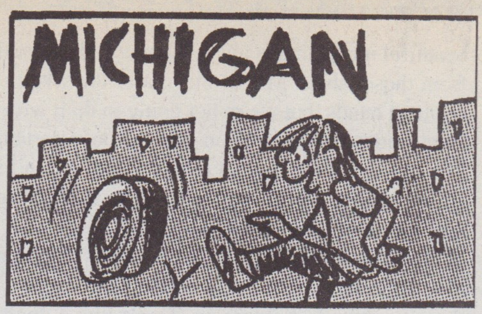


Hi *MRR*. Zach here from Michigan, letting all the punx across the world know what's going on here, mainly the greater Detroit area and a little bit of West Michigan. I'll start with bands first:

THREATENER is breaking up in July after they play their last show ever at the Barbaric Thrash Fest in California, which will probably have already taken place by the time this goes to print. They left behind a demo, two 7"s on 625 Thrash, and some tracks on the *Tomorrow Will Be Worse Vol 4* comp. They should have a final 7" out by the end too. This band played blazing fast thrash; I've probably seen them more times than anyone besides their tour roadie Corey, and they killed every fucking time. They will be sadly missed. (www.people.emich.edu/mpriehsjr/threatener.html)

KNEE DEEP IN SHIT was my old band. We broke up last year, but before that we managed to put out a demo tape, a CD-R, and a 7" called *Fucking Destroyed,* which I still have copies of for $3ppd–US/$5ppd–World. We played early 80s influenced hardcore punk/thrash, like GANG GREEN (who we covered) or DEEP WOUND. We got offered a split 7" with our brothers in thrash, I ACCUSE!, which will may end up still doing. We'll see. (chaosnonmusica@gmail.com or Zach Howard, 5726 Sussex Ct. Troy MI 48098 USA)

I ACCUSE! fucking rips, as anyone who's heard their 7" on Sound Pollution can attest to. They've been gigging in and out of state constantly, and went on a week long tour last winter. They're heading out again this summer, so catch them if you get the chance. They should have a 2nd 7" out by the tour (mid-July) too. (www.angelfire.com/mi4/iaccuse)

XBRAINIAX is a relatively new band comprised of members of KNEE DEEP IN SHIT, THREATENER, and I ACCUSE! I play guitar for this band. We play ridiculously fast thrash/powerviolence and all our songs are short as fuck. We do covers of INFEST and NO COMMENT. So far we have a demo tape out which has ten songs in 3:30. We just recorded for a 2nd demo, which is about the same length. These are/will be out on my tape label called Not Very Nice Tapes (which I will talk about in a minute). If you want a copy of the 1st demo, or just

HOMBRINUS DUDES

to contact us, write to the KNEE DEEP IN SHIT email or address above.

THE BILL BONDSMEN plays excellent hardcore punk that definitely has a "Midwest" sound to it. They have an EP out on singer Tony's label Fourteegee Profuctions label called *The Swinging Sounds Of….* It's $4 ppd from Tony's address. They've been playing out a lot, in and out of state, so go see them if they come to your town. (Tony Bevaque, 8863 Dixie, Detroit MI 48239, tha4tg@hotmail.com, www.existentialista.com/bbm/bbm.htm)

HOMBRINUS DUDES, from Grand Rapids, is a fucking amazing two-piece grind/thrash band. When I saw them for the first time they reminded me of early NAPALM DEATH with a little bit of CROM. They're real nice guys too and their drummer has a crazy, unorthodox drumming style. They have a split 7"/CD-R with LOADED FOR BEAR from Chicago on Blood Money Records (bloodmoneydistro@yahoo.com). Definitely check these guys out!!! (hombrinusdudes@yahoo.com)

DEATH IN CUSTODY plays great hardcore punk with a little heavier (but not total mosh metal) edge. They've been around for a few years, but only have a few demos out so far. Hopefully they will have some vinyl soon. (www.deathincustody.com/, deathincustody@hotmail.com)

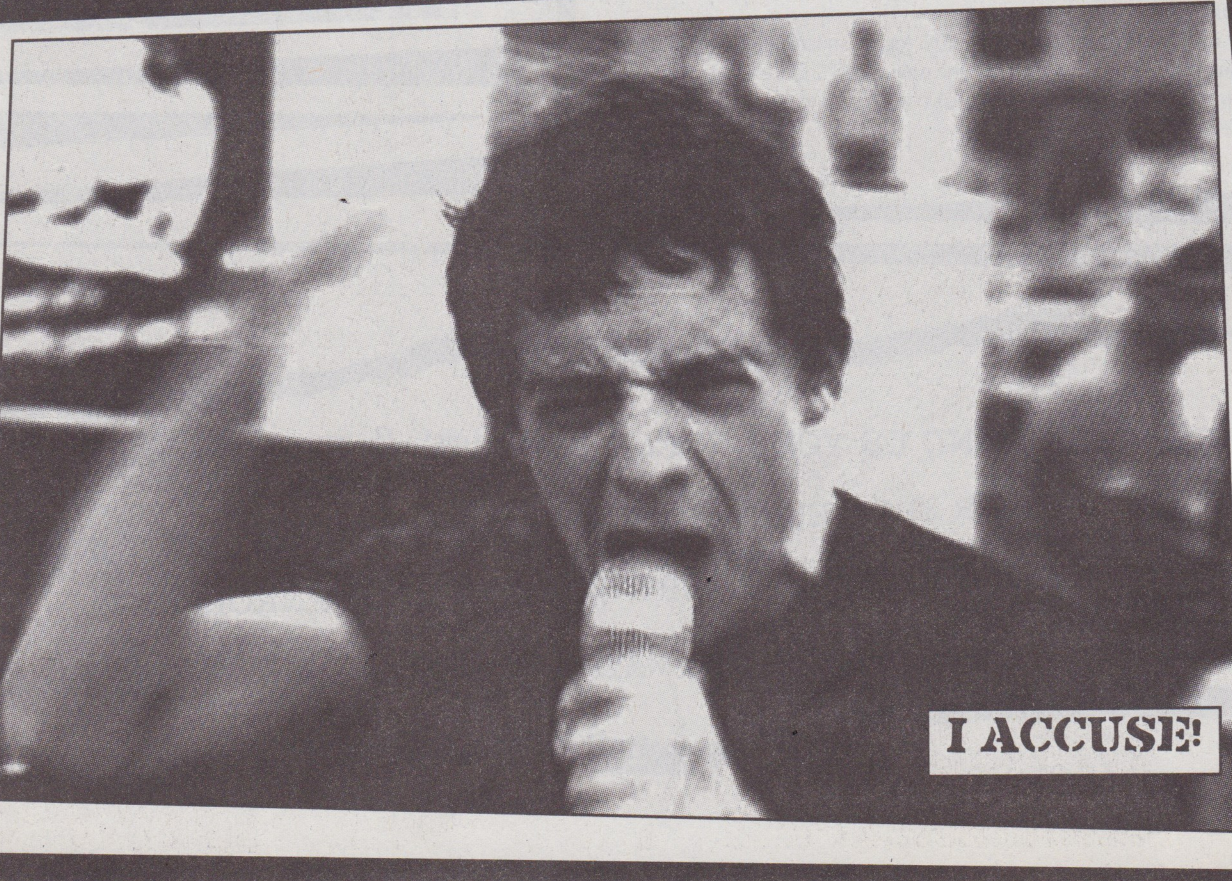
RANDOM AXE OF TERROR is comprised of fuckin' insane crusties! They had a demo out (which is no longer available), but they will be appearing on the *All Punks Spending Drunk Night* compilation 7" on Distort Ohio Records. (I don't have an address for these fucks, so contact me and I'll pass the message along)

GODDAMN! is a new band that plays high energy HC. Two songs of theirs appear on the *Flesh Wave #1* comp tape that comes with issue #1 of *Flesh Wave* zine (more on that in a sec). This is a great new band! (www.downheart.com/gd, adam@downheart.com)

Finally, MERCILESS GAME is a band that I do by myself. I play all the instruments and attempt to sound like old Japanese noisecore bands like CONFUSE, GAI, and STATE CHILDREN. So far I have a split demo with another band I did called SCUM OF THE EARTH, which was total DISCLOSE worship. This is out on my label Not Very Nice Tapes. A split 7" with CTHUWULF (from California) is forthcoming.

There aren't many labels here in Michigan. Most bands release their

I ACCUSE!



I ACCUSE!

records themselves or on out of state labels, but here's what I know of:

Tony from the BILL BONDSMEN does Fourteegee Profuctions which released the BILL BONDSMEN 7" and a few records before that. I think he's planning on doing some more stuff with the label though. Write to the BILL BONDSMEN address.

Eric Z does Element Records, which has released some great records, including a four volume 7" set dedicated to hardcore bands that skate and have songs that revolve around skating. Fuck yeah! He also runs Refuge Skateshop which occasionally holds shows in the back room. (Refuge Skateshop, 3423 Telegraph, Dearborn MI 48124-3243)

I do a tape label/distro called Not Very Nice Tapes. I've released five tapes so far, and helped co-release the SEE YOU IN HELL/MASS GENOCIDE PROCESS split 7" with about fifteen other labels. I have tons of tapes planned by bands like CRESS, GODSTOMPER, SPOONFUL OF VICODIN, DEAD RADICAL, and more. I also distro a ton of tapes and some records and CDs too. Write to my address for a full list or check out my website at www.geocities.com/nvndistro.

On to zines. As with labels, there aren't many zines here in Michigan either. I did *For Idiot* zine for about a year and put out two issues. The 2nd is still available and has an interview with BEYOND DESCRIPTION from Japan, and an article on DAMNABLE EXCITE ZOMBIES, plus reviews and shit. Write to me to get ahold of a copy. Currently I'm working on a new zine called *Not Very Nice*, which is basically *For Idiot* under a new name (some of the stuff that was supposed to be in *For Idiot* issue 3 will be in the first issue of *Not Very Nice*). Both zines take after the raw cut and paste style of zines like *Crust War, Destroy*, and *R'lyeh Rising*, so if you dig those zines, maybe check out mine. *Not Very Nice* Vol 1 will have interviews with GREEN!. WIDESPREAD BLOODSHED, SPOONFUL OF VICODIN, and CYNESS. I don't know when it will be out, but you can be sure I'll send a copy into *MRR* for review though, so watch that section. Yeesh, enough of my self-important rambling.

The only other punk related zine that I know of here is *Flesh Wave*. The first issue has an interview with the BILL BONDSMEN (which was just reprinted in MRR #264), plus reviews, drawings, and other cool shit. It also comes with a comp tape of local bands like GODDAMN!, I ACCUSE!, DEATH IN CUSTODY, and more. Write to the editor Mike at: 21620 Hoffman, St Clair Shores MI, 48082, or fleshwave@hotmail.com.

Ok, that's all. Sorry I didn't really touch on any clubs or places to hang out or anything like that. Maybe next time (if there is one from me). Sorry to all the bands I left out too. I wasn't intentional, I assure you. Peace! —Zach.

I ACCUSE!

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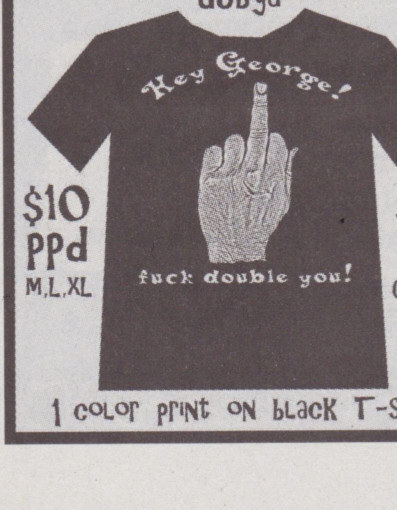
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DESTRUX
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DESTRUX

When it comes to good hardcore punk these days, it seems like everybody is just waiting for the next Black Flag. People love all the bands just playing rehashed hardcore punk that may sound like it did in the 80s, but lacks the heart due to it being revival bullshit. I strongly feel we have progressed as punks since then. We have new challenges and new things that concern us as punk rockers. A lot of us that are playing in bands today were not even alive to see most of the bands we are copying note by note. In 2005 bands need to bring something new to the table. I am not saying the music has to change, or that we have to write more arty bullshit, but I mean lyrics and passion for what's going on today. Bands playing need to embrace today's hardcore community and stop trying to live in one that is long since past. The band DESTRUX is a great representation of today's hardcore punk band. They play with heart, and support today's hardcore punk scene. Please read on and check out a great new band…

Interview by Ryan Cappelletti

MRR: What are your names and what do you do in Destrux?

Ben: Ben Strux and I do the singing.

Jarad: Jarad I play the skins and battle Ryan Cappelletti.

Adam: Adam, I shred the gnar on the battleaxe of doom.

Jon: I'm Jon and I play bass.

MRR: How long has Destrux been around and how did you guys get started?

Ben: About two years ago this August, I joined Destrux because the dudes knew I had just left an old band I was in. I had a microphone so they asked me to try out.

Jarad: I started the band with Adam a long time ago, maybe two years? That was before we actually had any real members besides each other, a flaky singer named Steve who never showed up to practice, and a kid named Brian who would only play Ramones songs. My cousin Bill played bass, so I got him in and stopped calling Brian and Steve and then Bill got Ben to sing, as Ben had just broken up with his old band, and we started rocking.

Adam: Yeah those kids were something else. Our first songs and shows I hope never to remember again.

Jon: Destrux has been around for roughly 2 years I think. I've only been in the band for about a year and a half, though, so I couldn't quite tell you about how the band in general started, but I can tell you how I was added to Destrux. The old bassist (one of our good friends, Bill) was asked to leave the band, and I have known Ben my entire life and I had been playing bass for a good 2 years so I was asked to join.

MRR: Where exactly did the name Destrux come from?

Jon: I think Jarad made it up, I'm not sure though.

Ben: Ask Adam.

Jarad : Adam made it up one day. It's horrible.

Adam: Its not that bad, its really Total Destrux, but we're too lazy to write the first five letters on flyers and stuff. We had ideas for names like Richie Rich and the Impotent Bitches, The Lactaiders, The Walking Gimps, but yeah...you get the idea.

MRR: So you are from Rochester, New York, can you tell us about the punk scene? bands, people, etc.?

Ben: There are tons of kids, tons of bands: it's just really amazing. Anything a scene could want is right here in Rochester. There are good places for shows, every band has their own style, so shows don't get repetitive, and we get a lot of good out-of-town bands coming through. There is a lot of respect for each other for the most part, and people are supportive of what everyone else does.

Jarad : I love the punk scene here, we have everything I've ever wanted. Cool kids, not a lot of drama and just fun times. There are a ton of bands coming through from all over and new kids show up to every show which makes it awesome. Some people say that it sucks but I don't listen to them..

Adam: The "ROT"-chester scene fucking rules, I love it here, we've had so many great bands come through such as: Voetsek, Vitamin X, Deadfall, Magrudergrind, Bruce Banner, Municipal

Waste, Crucial Unit, and all those shows always have huge turnouts. With kids, even if there aren't any out of town bands, they will just come rip it up for locals, everyone's cool with each other, and mostly everyone has respect for everything. I suggest any band touring to definitely come here, we will show them a great time.

Jon: Rochester is a very special place. We have such a great scene. The bands are amazing, and the people are just so cool and so friendly. There is a lot of diversity between the genres of punk rock here and almost all the people from these genres come together which I find to be rare and it's so cool to know that we can all work together.

MRR: You are a pretty young band, with your ages ranging from sixteen to eighteen; playing this style of music, I'm sure you have been compared to a lot of old bands. Being a young new band, how do you feel about today's scene in contrast with hearing about scenes of the past?

Ben: I don't really think there are that many differences, because kids are always coming to shows consistently, starting bands, going on the road, putting out records and just playing punk because its what they want to do. I just think the internet is the biggest difference, and it's been positive and negative. It's really easy to just search about bands on the internet, and then order a record or whatever, and it gets sent right to you and you can just keep doing this over and over, instead of going out to a record store and hearing about bands by word of mouth. So I guess it really helps bands get their music around more easily, and helps kids obtain it more easily. The biggest problem is shit talking. All the bullshit that comes with message boards and all that other crap really put stress on friendships, interaction at shows and whatever. It just really sucks to know someone can ruin everything for other people because of a computer.

Jarad: It's a lot more internet beef: let's not talk face to face but behind computer screens, "STFU n00b" bullshit. Fuck that. I'd rather hang out with people than talk to them in a stupid chat room. I like being compared to bands, because for a while I couldn't really think of any band that we sounded like, but a lot of the bands we listen to give us a heavy influence and affect our sound.

Adam: Yeah, definitely the whole internet thing is the main communication in most scenes in my opinion. I mean back in the 80s, kids didn't have that shit, they just went up to whoever and just said, "Hey here's a flyer. You should definitely come to this. You will love it," or something along those lines, and kids would just get into it. Yeah, its pretty sweet being young. I just turned seventeen. It has its ups and downs, like parents kinda coming down on you about touring and shit like that, but still I think if you're a young teenage band that can rip the shit up, then people definitely give you way more credit. I couldn't really compare our music to anyone, I couldn't think of any band. I guess some say we sound like Neon Christ. I agree, but we draw influences from bands like Scholastic Deth, DRI, WHN?, and even old metal and rock bands.

Jon: I am very impressed with today's scene as compared to what I have heard about the punk rock scenes of the 80's. It sounds like from what I hear, punks weren't really as accepting or welcoming of newer kids into the scene as they are now.

MRR: I hear a lot of people say that punk rock in the past few years has been way easier to get into, as far as starting a band, a distro, or being involved in any other way. How do you feel about this?

Ben: Like I already said, the internet enables everyone to network and communicate more quickly. Records can be ordered, mp3s heard, emails exchanged. Everything you want in punk is right on a screen in front of you.

Jarad : Yeah, with the amount of show spaces/collectives, distros and bands that are out there, it's become really easy to get into the punk community. Adam and I just started a distro with our friend Graham called Hectic Youth. We distro tapes and CDs, videos and patches and it'll be starting up in a few months, with a lot of self released tapes of different bands from all over the world. It's a lot easier with the internet to communicate because a few years ago I'd never have thought of talking to someone from Southeast Asia about trading records or anything like that.

Adam: Yeah, it's definitely a whole lot easier to get into things within the scene because, like Jarad said, the internet really does help allow us get in touch with bands and label/distro owners from other states and countries, which is awesome because it gives everyone a chance to hear new music and learn about other scenes.

Jon: I think that is true. I see a lot of new bands popping up all over the place and people starting little distros or labels and I think that is great. I mean, these kids that are just getting into the scene seem to be getting younger and younger and I think that is great because these kids could be the next JFA or Negative Approach.

MRR: Do you feel there are still struggles being in punk today and playing in a band?

Ben: Yeah, punks have parents still.

Jarad : Yeah, it's not really a big deal but people can be real stupid and have dumb attitudes instead of just playing their music. It's like they have to prove something to get everyone to like them and I think its pretty lame, but for the most part, the only struggle is making good music.

Adam: What he said.

Jon: I have never really faced any trouble in punk rock, and I don't really think there is any today except for keeping jerks out of the scene.

MRR: What is your favorite Destrux song to play and why?

Ben: "You Have no Power Over Me" probably. It just gets me really pumped to play, and I always feel like I'll never escape this labyrinth.

Jarad: "Into the Battle" is a newer song. It has a pretty rad intro and it gets me pumped to play it. All of our newer songs are a lot tighter and faster to play, and when we're at shows it's a lot of fun, with the kids going nuts, and it's good times.

Adam: I'd say "xFashionxCorex Is A Bore." That song is being put on the *Internationally Pist Vol.2* comp. Punks Before Profits is putting it out. The beginning is a really intense buildup and is just raging with full power of thrashness. I love playing most of our new songs, because they're so much better and sound very different from those on our 7". I think people will definitely notice a change. For the good.

Jon: I really really like to play "Tortured Turned Terrorist." There's something in that song that makes you just wanna go koo koo and go crazy. I think it is a great song to which you can release your frustration.

MRR: What releases does Destrux have out, and what are your plans for the future as far as records and touring go?

Ben: Our EP came out in December on Punks Before Profits, run by one of the coolest dudes ever: Ryan. We have been asked to do some splits in the upcoming months and I think we are gonna do one with Warsquad from Rochester, eventually, and a split 7" with Under Attack from Singapore. Touring-wise, who knows? We have been asked to do some stuff this summer and we may do some weekends, but we are still a young band and some of us still live with our parents.

Adam: Yeah we have a lot of shit in mind, but right now we're working on another 7" EP. We're going to tour the U.S. And strip and buy porn. Actually, probably not, but yeah I hope we get to tour more.

MRR: So you have a 7" on Punks Before Profits. How did that come about? What are your thoughts on your first record?

Ben: Ryan liked us a lot and asked us to do a 7", so we accepted and it came out pretty well. For a first record I couldn't be more proud of it, but we can only get better.

Jarad: It's really sweet for us to have the record out. I think it came out great but it's never the same as live.

Adam: I'm very proud of our first release, it's gotten such a great response from people all over. And Punx Before Profits really has helped us get our name out there.

Jon: We really wanted to do something that put Destrux out there and got us some recognition. I don't quite remember what hooked us up with Ryan and Barb from Punks Before Profits but they really gave us a boost and got our name out. I love the 7". I've been playing in bands for years now and I was never given the chance to make something that is professionally done and that people really enjoy, and I get so much joy from people telling me that they like our band and really dig the 7".

MRR: There seems to be a shit ton of bands around today putting out records, touring, etc. It seems really easy for bands to get caught up in their own success and egos. To me punk is just an international community of going to shows, hanging out, skating and most importantly supporting each other. How do you guys feel about this when you experience this first hand in your own community or other communities that you have played?

Ben: 95% of the time everyone is respectful and supportive and accepting to everyone else. But there are always those kids or adults, or whatever, who get on their high horse and talk shit and shoot everyone else down.

Jarad: I think we're lucky to be in a punk community where a bunch of kids have just starting coming to shows, because that way everyone starts getting to know each other at the same time and there aren't any dumb cliques or anyone trying to act like a jerk. Some kids do, but that's just how they are, and it happens everywhere. The new bands that have sprung up over the past two years have been really awesome and all the kids seem into just going to a show and having fun. No one's trying to impress anyone and it's real genuine.

Adam: It feels great seeing all the kids coming together to enjoy something that is so real and awesome. I love going to shows just to see the kids being who they are. And I love playing out-of-town shows, because you get to see the other scenes and how they're different.

Jon: I do find it very annoying when an out-of-town band, or maybe even some bands here in Rochester, make complete asses out of themselves, and trash a venue or just be flat-out jerks to the people who have welcomed them to our town and given them a chance to see what the Rochester scene is all about, just because they may be more "talented" or are more famous than some of our local bands. I rarely witness these occasions, but when it does happen, they surely get a piece of our mind.

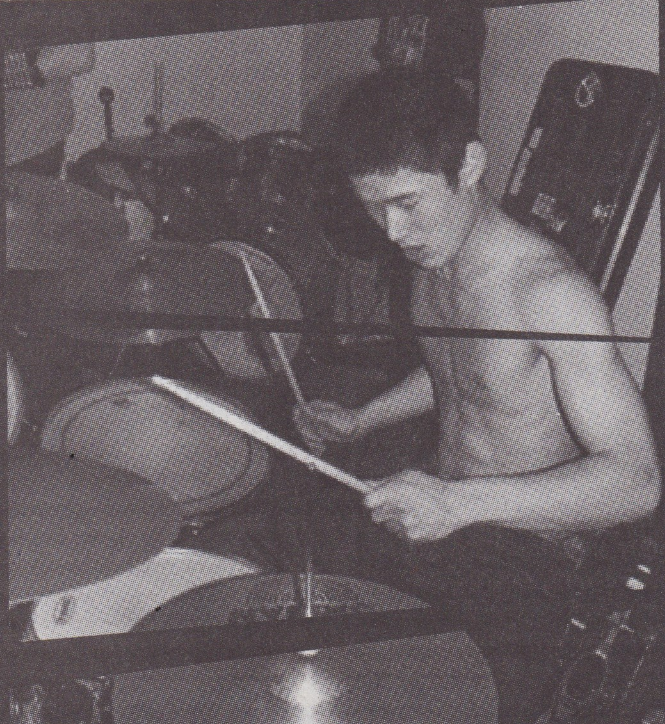
MRR: Any final thoughts you would like to say to finish up the interview?

Ben: Punx kill!

Jarad : Thanks Ryan and Bar, Joe Angrypunk/Squad/SFD, hello to all our friends and the bands in Rochester or bands that we've played with. Big ups to the beer brigade at the Pink Lady headquarters. Go out and skate!

Adam: Thanks to everyone who has ever supported us. And to those who didn't like us or booed us, because it helped us become better than them, and now we make them feel dumb. Buy records, go to shows, support your goddamn scene and don't EVER take it for granted. Oh, and I love you, Ryan.

Jon: Stay punk and get crunk!



GIANT HAYSTACKS

Giant Haystacks is a three-piece band from Oakland, California. They write minimal, understated songs that still manage to draw out the complexities and absurdities of the world around us. Their newest LP, Blunt Instrument, *is a tour de force that stands heads and shoulders above a sea of unremarkable clone bands and faux "art-punk" hipster wankery. Unpretentious, thoughtful, and punk as fuck, this band could be your life. Interview by Golnar Nikpour and Chris Hubbard.*

(Allan: Guitar, vocals. Nate: Drums. Daniel: Bass, vocals)

MRR: So—like everyone else—I hear a lot of Minutemen influence in your songs. I wonder how conscious of a decision that was. Was it premeditated, like "Let's sound like this old SST band," or was it a kind of organic thing that happened when the three of you got together?

Nate: It was in the ad, but it was a pretty organic process.

Allan: I think that a lot of the Minutemen comparisons come from the fact that we're a three-piece, and that I listen to an awful lot of the Minutemen, but I don't think that Nate and Daniel would've considered that band to be a huge personal influence.

Nate: Right.

Allan: So, I think a lot of that comes from me, but…

Daniel: But once we decided to go the Minutemen route, it was like living in a totalitarian society. *[laughter]*

MRR: I ask because it seems like in the punk scene there has, in recent years, been a big push for bands to keep to particular styles, or to ape sounds or aesthetics that are based wholly on the past. I'll read reviews of you records that say, "Giant Haystacks sounds like the Minutemen," or "sounds like Gang of Four," but I think that there's a lot more at work in your songs as well. Does this ever frustrate you? Or when you write songs, is it like, "We have to sound like this, we can't sound another way?"

Allan: I don't think so. I don't think we ever consciously tried to write a song that sounded like another band or tried to evoke another era or anything like that. We really write songs totally organically, just the three of us in the practice room. We come up with ideas, so it's not like we come up with something and say, "Oh that sounds really like that Gang of Four song, let's play that."

Nate: It's never been the opposite, either, where we've thought, "Oh shit, that sounds like the Minutemen, we shouldn't do that." It goes both ways, I don't think there's been anything where we have noticed a similarity and stopped it, or worked on it because of that similarity.

Allan: And I don't think it's that frustrating when we get compared to the same sort of bands in reviews, but I definitely think that we're sort of original, we aren't a retro band. We're not totally original—we obviously sound like the Minutemen in some ways—not just the Minutemen at all, though. Every band sounds like other bands, but I definitely think we're not a revivalist act.

MRR: I've seen you guys play with a lot of different kinds of bands, from indie rock bands, to hardcore bands, to pop punk bands, not to mention every band from Denmark that's come to the United States. *[laughter]* How do you situate yourselves in the punk scene, or in independent music? Do you think of yourselves as total punks, insiders in the scene, or is it a more difficult fit? That is, do you have a sense of yourselves as belonging to a particular scene, or are you more like lone gunmen in a way, playing with different kinds of bands, playing different kinds of shows, some DIY shows, some club shows…?

Daniel: I mean, there isn't really a scene, is there?

Allan: There are a lot of scenes, I think…

Daniel: But I don't think we belong to any one.

Allan: I think that we're kind of lucky in that we can almost fit with any scene, but it also hurts us. Because we don't sound like a hardcore band, there are a lot of people that wouldn't ever consider us for a hardcore bill, even though we've played with hardcore bands and it's usually a good time. I think that a lot of people believe that kids who go to hardcore shows just want to go to a hardcore show and see five hardcore bands that all sound similar, that're all playing thrash or whatever. I've found, though, that those kids are more open to different kinds of music, than, say, the kids at an indie rock show or a pop punk show or whatever.

Daniel: I met a guy from Burnt Ramen on the BART one time, and I happened to have a copy of one of our early demos with us, and I gave it to him, and he was like, "We'll definitely hook you guys up." And I never heard from him again! *[laughter]* And if he happens to be reading this interview, I'm still waiting! *[laughter]*

Allan: To be fair, we never really tried to get a show at Burnt Ramen or anything like that…

MRR: It's too far… *[laughter]*

Allan: I think that we do sort of exist outside of a lot of different scenes, or on the edge of a lot of different scenes. I don't think there is a scene for what we do, for the kind of music we play. Unfortunately, I think there was a time when the phrase "punk rock" was enough. It was open and it wasn't narrowly defined, and it could refer to us, it could refer to Tragedy, it could refer to whatever…

MRR: For me it still does.

Allan: But a lot of people don't think of it that way. When some people hear "punk" they think… everyone you talk to has a different idea of what that means.

MRR: But, conversely, it seems like a lot of different people are into your band… Giant Haystacks: *[laughter]*

Allan: I don't know, I think a diverse…

Nate: Were you not there two hours ago? *[laughter]*

MRR: No, I wasn't. I actually missed the show…*[laughter]*

Allan: Tonight was a good turnout, but there aren't a lot of people who are into our band, or if there are, they keep quiet about it. They don't come to our gigs or buy our records. *[laughter]*

Nate: It's probably the most frustrating band I've been in, since I really feel that people would like it. But we don't seem to connect, y'know?

Allan: I've been involved in the DIY punk scene for 20 years, and I feel at home in that scene, and I feel connected to it, and I've worked in it…

Nate: But we've played shows in that scene, and it doesn't always feel that…

Allan: It took us a long time to get a show at Gilman, it took us a long time to get any kind of DIY show, I don't really know why, because it's not like we didn't know the right people—we did—but, I don't know…

Nate: We're hanging in the ether.

MRR: That can be the title of the interview—"Giant Haystacks: Hanging in the Ether." *[laughter]*

Nate: That's exactly what I was shooting for…

Allan: Nate just likes to talk in pull quotes. *[laughter]*

MRR: The next question is about the decision to self-release your latest LP. Why do it yourselves? It seems like in the past few years, "post punk" or "art punk" or whatever the phrase is has become an incredibly marketable, popular, but not at all DIY thing. Is there a pull toward that for Giant Haystacks? This hipster art crowd, are they banging down your door?

Allan: No.

MRR: It seems like you could fit in musically, but you're just much different aesthetically and ethically.

Nate: I mean, we didn't really have an option for releasing the LP. If we would've bugged Smart Guy enough, we probably…

Allan: We would've had a record out next year.

Nate: We probably could've talked him into it.

Allan: But he has no money. It would've been a year, and we'd be on tour with no record again. The main reason we put it out ourselves is that we could do a better job of it ourselves. We recorded, mastered, mixed, pressed, and had the covers screened, and from start to finish the whole record took us two months. There's no label in the world that could have done it that efficiently, that quickly. As far as the broader question, that post punk thing — there is a lot of that going on, but a lot of it gets lumped in as post punk because some of the bands…

Nate: We're not dance-y enough.

Allan: ...some of the bands sound a bit like either Joy Division or Gang of Four or whatever, but when you listen to them, they really don't. They've got some of the trappings of that style, but none of them are really punk at all. They're pop bands—which there's nothing wrong with, y'know, I like a lot of those bands. I definitely think that we've got some aspects of that style, but I think that a lot of what we do is kind of weird in an SST Records, Minutemen kind of way. Yeah it's post punk, but it's not cool. It's just kind of weird or quirky or just dorky or whatever. We're not fashionable and we're not…Maybe if we were all ten years younger, we'd do real well…

Nate: Speak for yourself, old man. *[laughter]*

Allan: Well, you're not exactly a spring chicken. *[laughter]*

Nate: Whatever.

MRR: I don't know about not fashionable. Allan, I've seen you in your weekend sweater...*[laughter]*

Nate: He has a suit that would kill people, dude.

MRR: I believe it.

Allan: I do have a nice suit.

Nate: An awesome suit!

Allan: I got a nice suit for Nate's wedding.

Nate: It's awesome. We are far from unfashionable.

Allan: I'm sorry. We're at the height of fashion. We're waiting for people to catch up. *[laughter]*

Nate: We're fashionable, we're just not "in fashion."

MRR: That's another pull quote, right there.

Nate: I've got dozens of them. I'm made for bold! *[laughter]*

Daniel: Bowled over.

MRR: Bowled over, is that what you said?!

Nate: He's the pun-master.

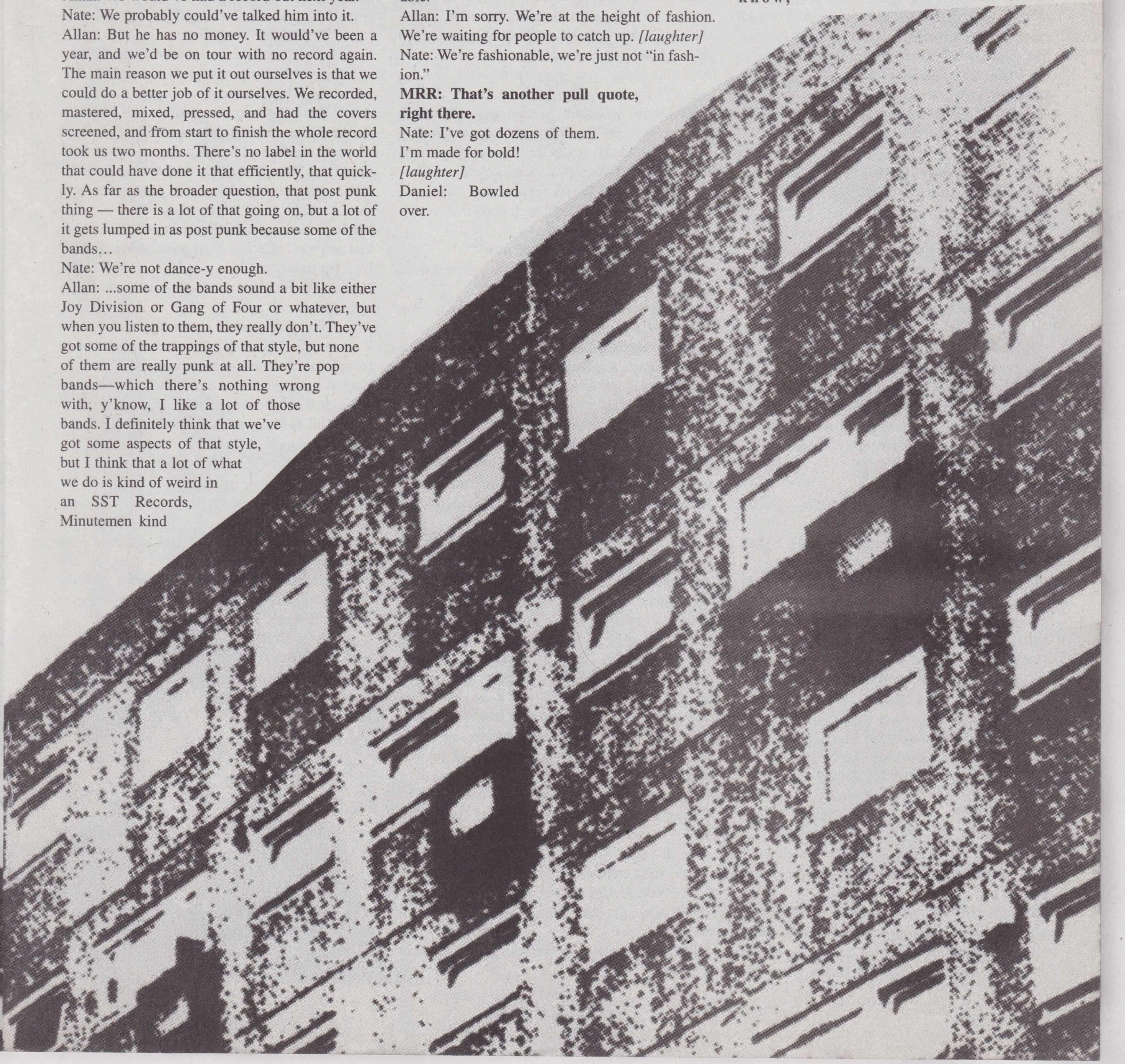
Allan: *[Pointing to Daniel]* He's got the puns, *[Pointing to Nate]* he's the pull quotes, I'm the…

Nate: He's the bullshit.

MRR: He's the straight man.

Allan: Exactly, I'm just the straight man. I just set those guys up.

MRR: The next question is about a specific song, "Life Goes On." I was wondering about the motivations behind writing it. The lyrics are critical of people living in this country who basically tune out suffering overseas when they aren't watching the news. But at the same time it seems like, to me, that writing a song that deals with tragedy far away, when you're not singing about it, means you can forget about it, or put it out of your mind. I just wanted to know,



why write this song? I suppose this question is directed at the person who wrote the lyrics…

Allan: I wrote the words to it. It's a good question, I hadn't really thought about it that way. It was written—like a lot of our songs are, actually—about a specific situation, and our personal responses to that situation. That one was written maybe right before the Iraqi elections when there was an escalation of violence. I was on BART and it was really busy on the train, and there were all these people who had been shopping and having a good time and living their lives and doing what everyone does, and I think maybe I was reading the paper or something. So I was just sort of struck by how easy it is for us to forget what's going on in the world and live our comfortable lives. As far as whether writing a song about that is an example of it, it probably is — I don't consider myself exempt from that sort of escapism. It was more just… it was two weeks before we had to record the album, and that song didn't have any lyrics. *[laughter]*

Nate: The songs aren't written about anything. We have music first and then they come up with lyrics that fit.

MRR: Um… *[laughter]* That is not a pull quote.

Allan: Some of the songs have lyrics first…

Nate: When?

Allan: "Winston is a Grass."

Nate: Oh, OK. One song out of 48…*[laughter]*

MRR: What does that mean, exactly, "Winston is a Grass?"

Allan: That song is actually about a piece of graffiti on a wall of an arcade in the town that I grew up in, and it says "Winston is a Grass." A "grass" is someone who has…

Nate: ...He's a fink!

Allan: It's like a stool pigeon, someone that has gone and told the cops something. And so I always wondered what he told the cops…

Nate: Where did Winston go?

Allan: Where did he go?

MRR: Winston, if you're reading this… *[laughter]*

Allan: We don't want to know him, he's a grass. He'll grass us up.

MRR: Winston, if you're reading this, fuck you.

Nate: Fuck you for ripping off the pinball arcade, it's not cool. Pinball is cool.

MRR: OK, back to the songs... in general, a lot of the lyrics to your records seem to have this regretful tone—sad, or wistful almost. There's an overall feeling of, "This is all there is, but life goes on." Is writing songs with that tone acquiescence, or some sort of struggle against? Because, a lot of your songs aren't political in a sort of straightforward, topical way.

Allan: Sometimes they're political in a topical way. That's my fault, that's where "Blunt Instrument" comes in. I'd like to use words or my guitar to make something really beautiful, but unfortunately it all comes out yelling about war or something.

MRR: Well, they come across as protest songs, y'know, but they're not straightforward, so…

Daniel: One of the things that might explain some of that somber tone you notice is that some of the songs have a quality of being a like vignettes, some a little humorous even, with aspects of everyday life that aren't necessarily depressing at all. They're just glimpses into reality. Especially the one about the scene in the boardroom with the recently bereaved… that's really funny when you think about it, the whole thing…

Nate: I don't think it's really funny. *[laughter]*

Daniel: Because with the female associate, I mean, the whole thing, cause it's just pretty over the top.

Nate: Our songs are about the minutia of life.

MRR: Yeah, I have to say, the lyrics to this new album in particular, every time I read them, I notice something new or interesting about them.

Allan: Typos? *[laughter]*

MRR: Yeah, what does this say? It's totally misspelled. These guys are idiots, fuck them. *[laughter]* Anyway, so… *[fiddling around with paper]* I had other questions…

Allan: How do you guys manage to look so young? Skincare tips?

MRR: Yeah, we definitely need more of those in Maximum. Just general maintenance, a how to… Incidentally, your hair is looking really nice tonight, Allan. It's a nice haircut.

Allan: Thank you, thanks for noticing. *[laughter]*

Nate: It's a little short; it'll look good in a week.

Allan: It'll grow, yeah.

MRR: I think it's really good now!

Allan: Thank you. Your hair looks great too, as always. *[laughter]*

Nate: You have great hair, I've noticed that at show after show. *[laughter]*

MRR: This is definitely going in the magazine… That's a pull quote!

Allan: That's the cover.

MRR: OK, OK... so, with all of this in mind — the struggles, finding your place in the scene, not being able to get shows at first, putting your own record out — why be in a band? Why be in this band in particular? What do you hope to accomplish as a band, is there anything in specific?

Allan: When I first reached out and tried to find people to play music with, the goal was to find some people to play music with. To find a practice space and come up with some songs. And then the goal was to play a show, and then the goal was to play some more shows, and then the goal was to record some songs, to make a record, to go on tour. We don't really have long-term goals. Really, I just wanted to play music with people, and everything else has sort of come along, y'know? We've been really successful with it, on those terms, given the sort of really moderate goals we've set for ourselves.

Nate: Someone put out our album and bought us dinner. It's like everything we asked for. *[laughter]*

Nate: It's true!

Allan: Yeah, but Daniel didn't get anything…

Nate: Well, he still got his album put out. We got dinner. I bought him a burrito once, he should be happy.

Allan: We've achieved everything that we want, y'know?

Nate: And we get to go on tour on Friday.

Allan: Friday we're going on tour for two and a half weeks, it's going to be loads of fun. No one's going to come and see us, but…

Nate: Fuck it. Johnson City, Tennessee! It's going to be the best show ever.

MRR: Yeah, Johnson City: Where everything happens.

Allan: Well, it will be.

Nate: It is. You print it, it's fuckin' true.

MRR: So, that leads into the obligatory "What's next?" question...

Allan: We recorded some songs a year ago.

Nate: Is this going to be for June? When is this magazine going to be out?

MRR: Um, let's see, it's May, the cover date for the magazine is July...so it'll be out in mid-June.

Allan: Well, we recorded songs over a year ago for a split 7" with This is My Fist…

Nate: Mid-June is LA! Two shows in LA. We'll be in LA and San Diego on the 25th and 26th. The 24th maybe, the 27th maybe.

Allan: That's the thing about our goals — our idea for the future are really like that! We don't think that far ahead. But, we're going to be on tour, though we'll be back from tour by the time that this comes out. And then, we'll play some more shows…

MRR: What's up with that split with This is My Fist anyway? 625 has been advertising that for like, ten months.

Nate: Dude, fuck that shit, fuck that shit. Fuck the split. *[laughter]*

Allan: No, it'll come out eventually, we recorded it a year ago. This is My Fist took a long time to record their stuff, and now it's waiting for artwork.

Nate: A long time. Try forever. They took forever.

Allan: It'll come out eventually…

Nate: This is My Fist is the slowest band in punk rock. *[laughter]*

MRR: *That'll* be the pull quote.

Nate: That's the pull quote.

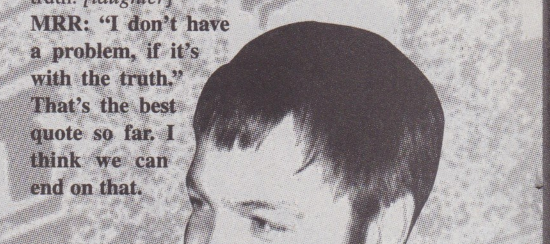
Allan: Slower than the Melvins on opium. *[laughter]*

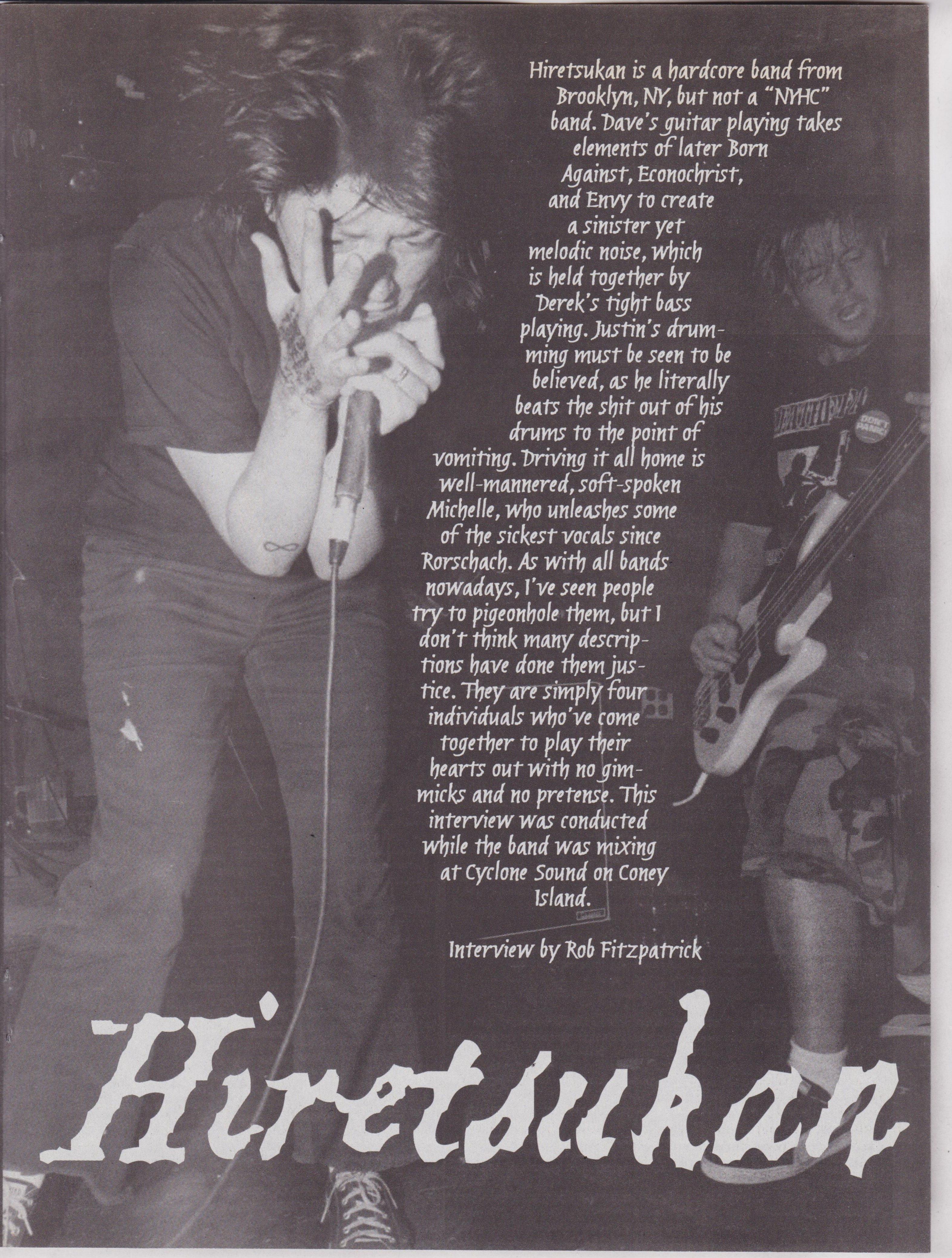
Nate: This is My Fist needs a kick in the ass.

Allan: God, don't say that!

Nate: It's true! I don't have a problem with the truth. *[laughter]*

MRR: "I don't have a problem, if it's with the truth." That's the best quote so far. I think we can end on that.





Hiretsukan

Hiretsukan is a hardcore band from Brooklyn, NY, but not a "NYHC" band. Dave's guitar playing takes elements of later Born Against, Econochrist, and Envy to create a sinister yet melodic noise, which is held together by Derek's tight bass playing. Justin's drumming must be seen to be believed, as he literally beats the shit out of his drums to the point of vomiting. Driving it all home is well-mannered, soft-spoken Michelle, who unleashes some of the sickest vocals since Rorschach. As with all bands nowadays, I've seen people try to pigeonhole them, but I don't think many descriptions have done them justice. They are simply four individuals who've come together to play their hearts out with no gimmicks and no pretense. This interview was conducted while the band was mixing at Cyclone Sound on Coney Island.

Interview by Rob Fitzpatrick

Hiretsukan

MRR: First off, I'd like to ask you for a brief history of your band.

Dave: Well, we started in Maryland in the fall of 1998. This is one of a lot of bands Derek and I have been in together since high school. It was a long-distance project for the most part. I was outside DC, Derek was in New York City, and Justin was in upstate New York. We spent a couple of years like that and had a couple of different vocalists until I moved up to New York and Michelle joined the band.

MRR: When did you start playing out consistently?

Dave: January of 1999.

Derek: Well, we were playing out in with a different singer initially, but we parted ways and it got inconsistent until Dave moved up and we met Michelle.

Dave: Derek was in school at the time, so any time he had a break, we'd try to do something. It'd be Thanksgiving break and he'd take the bus down, we'd go over new songs in a couple of hours, and record a demo. We did a winter tour like that. Pick up Derek, practice until three in the morning, and go on tour for 10 days.

Derek: We didn't get serious until Michelle joined and we were all in the same city. If you want to backdate us, I'd say 2000.

MRR: Michelle, what did you do as far the scene goes before you joined the band? Were you in any bands?

Michelle: No, I practiced with a friend, once, and played drums and stuff and when I was a teenager. But I'd never been in a band or done any kind of vocals before this.

MRR: How do you think being female affects how people treat you at shows?

Michelle: I think people usually keep the shitty comments to themselves, so I usually get positive feedback. I hope I don't get positive comments just because I'm a girl, but I can safely assume that I probably do. Not probably. I can assume that I do.

MRR: Why did you guys want a female vocalist?

Derek: I think that when we met Michelle, it introduced a whole new dynamic. I didn't take into consideration what a female would add or bring to the band or anything like that. That wasn't any part of the decision-making¾it was just what was right for the music.

Dave: It isn't a gender thing. It's about the chemistry between the four of us.

MRR: You're obviously not a "NYHC" band. How do you see yourselves fitting into the scene?

Dave: We don't really sound like a lot of bands we play with, but I definitely consider us part of the scene.

Derek: I feel like that's an unfair stigma, you know? New York Hardcore is considered synonymous with tough-guy hardcore, and I don't think that's fair to the scene here or the bands that are playing. I think that maybe it was at one time.

MRR: Yeah, if you go back in history, that's the stigma that's gotten attached to it.

Dave: I have a lot of respect for that scene's history but it's not where we're coming from.

Michelle: It's not just about bands--it's about people. The scene is about communication and support and community.

MRR: What would you say your influences are?

Justin: Throw a rock.

Dave: I'd say melody is a huge influence on the band. A lot of people think we have these metal roots but that's really not the case. I took a lot of influence from bands like Leatherface, early Jawbreaker, music that was aggressive and angry and really well composed. Hearing some of the bands on Ebullition was a turning point for me, being inspired to take the concept of melody and introduce it in a way that's abrasive and dissonant.

Derek: We all have our own influences and our music comes from where those influences meet.

MRR: I see all four of you bringing different cards to the table. I think if one of you left, it wouldn't sound nearly the same.

Michelle: Honestly, I take a lot of inspiration from Dave, Derek, and Justin. This is going to sound really silly, but it's times when the band is playing together that it really just hits me inside. It's this emotional outlet and release.

Justin: I completely agree with Michelle. Really, all of my inspiration comes from within the band. It can be overwhelming. There are countless moments when, while we're playing, I'll look up and see Derek or Dave, or I'll hear Michelle just letting loose, and all of a sudden there's something coming out of me that I didn't even know was there.

MRR: Have you ever been at the point where you did-

n't feel inspired in this band? I know you broke up for a year and a half or so.

Derek: When we split up, it was a shock. It came out of nowhere but I also felt like maybe the band had run its course. You know, it was a little bit of a relief [*laughter*].

Dave: The thing is, we work really hard. We work ourselves into the ground and it's a bad way to operate. We broke up right after we killed ourselves getting *Invasive* together, then did a five-week tour, and we came back and I don't think we even caught our breath. We started playing shows immediately. Right after that tour we played with Against Me! at ABC. It should've been incredible and I just didn't feel a thing. That's when I really started wondering, "What's the fucking point of this?" I know Justin felt that way, too, and when he started making noises about quitting the band, I didn't do anything to try to talk him out of it. Like Derek said, it was kind of a relief. I realize now we just needed to take some time off and recompose ourselves. We can't do this halfway and it felt like we were going through the motions.

Michelle: Yeah, definitely.

MRR: So what was the catalyst for reforming?

Dave: It was a drawn-out process over the course of a year and half. Justin and I backlashed and were going to start a completely different band. We needed a bass player, so after a while we started playing with Derek again. Then the sound started to gravitate back towards hardcore and after about a year it was like "Why aren't we in Hiretsukan again?" So we started to talking to Michelle about it and… [*to Michelle*] I don't knobw if you want to say anything about that.

Michelle: It took me a while, like half a year. In the meantime they were trying out other people. I would go to their practices just to see what was going on. It wasn't like we weren't friends. I went over to Dave's one night and he was just playing guitar and he was playing me stuff he had written. We had already been though like a million conversations about me rejoining the band and I was always like, "No," or on the fence. He just played something one night and I decided I really did want to do it again. We had a meeting at my place before anything happened. This is too much information, but I felt like our personal interactions with each other, our communication level, was at a standstill and that in order to restart ourselves or regain composure we really had to sit down and just hash shit out.

Derek: I thought that was huge. If we had not sat down at your house and rehashed a lot of the things that caused us to break up we probably would have lasted six months and called it a day.

Dave: I just want to make it clear, we at no point were talking about reforming Hiretsukan without Michelle. It would have been a different band. We played with some great people but it just wasn't the same. I remember finally saying to Derek that if we weren't going to have Michelle in the band and it wasn't going to be Hiretsukan, I didn't want to fuckin do it. [*Pause*]. And at the time that was really bad news because it was pretty clear Michelle wasn't coming back [*laughter*].

MRR: As far as your lyrics go, you guys talk about social issues, ranging from labor issues to sexual abuse and everything in between. How do you social issues play into your lives?

Michelle: It's pretty much a daily thing for me. When you live in a community and you see what's going on around you and you feel like there's almost nothing to live for… I know I'm really sensitive but I can't help it. Shit just infuriates me. Everything is so stagnant, just this routine function and it really brings me down. We talk about things that are important to us. They just come to a head, and being able to release that within the band or within conversation or anything is amazing, and it's just great if you think that someone who's listening might be able to take something out of that. I'll cling to any fucking hope I have, I guess [*laughter*].

Melody is a huge influence on the band. A lot of people think we have these metal roots but that's really not the case. I took a lot of influence from bands like Leatherface, early Jawbreaker, music that was aggressive and angry and really well composed. Hearing some of the bands on Ebullition was a turning point for me, being inspired to take the concept of melody and introduce it in a way that's abrasive and dissonant.

MRR: What about your daily lives? Dave, I know you were involved with UNITE.

Dave: Yeah, I worked for a labor union for four years, but right now I'm trying to live my life in a way that's outside of, I don't want to say "the system," but I want to be self-employed, I don't want a boss, and I don't want to have to make the compromises I was forced to make. Even though the organization I was working for is doing some great work, there are a lot of unpleasant things that happen behind the scenes. I'm much happier being somewhat autonomous.

MRR: What do you do besides play music?

Michelle: I do art photography and I read a lot.

Dave: I do photography, too, but more freelance work for some of the newspapers and magazines around the city.

MRR: So you're recording with Don Fury. He's pretty well known in the hardcore scene. What made you choose Don and how are things going?

Derek: Other than him wanting to kill us right now, it's been great [*laughter*].

Michelle: He's a really determined guy and I think that's really good for the band. He's not going to be satisfied until every person within in the band, the record label if there is one, and he himself is happy. I've only recorded with him, so I'm quite spoiled.

Derek: On every project we've done, he's connected himself in such a way that he's drives us to do better. He pushes us because he wants the project to be better.

MRR: What's up with the new record? When's it coming out?

Michelle: The new record is called *End States*. It'll be out in early July. I guess the lyrics address a lot of topics we feel don't get touched upon enough, some that maybe do get touched upon but with a different point of view, and some personal things too.

MRR: Will it be on G7?

Dave: Yeah.

MRR: How'd you hook up with them?

Dave: We just sent them a demo and they liked it enough to ask us to do an EP. They've just been really incredible. You were asking about inspiration before: it's a major source of inspiration for me that this label and collective I have so much respect for has been so enthusiastic and supportive.

MRR: How'd your tour go last year?

Justin: It was a blast, even though everything went wrong. I got really sick. Everyone got sick. Dave drank too much Nyquil and lost his mind. I followed him around just to see if he'd lie down on the highway. Our friend Matt was the best person to have with us. He saved our lives. All the people we met, hung out with, played with--everyone was great. The best part was when we were driving to West Virginia, and playing Sabbath really loud, and Dave scared Michelle, so she beat the living shit out of him. Then we got to fire shotguns.

Michelle: I had this whole thing with a lucky quarter: I'd give it to different people in the band every night. But I also had a lucky rock. Towards the end of tour and I'd hand it off to each person and we'd rub it for God knows what reason.

Derek: Because it was lucky [*laughter*].

Michelle: Because it was lucky, but we did it while we were setting up so people would be looking at us and we probably looked like we were in a fucking cult.

Dave: Didn't Derek spend the lucky quarter?

Michelle: Yeah, on like gum or Red Bull or some shit.

MRR: Any last words?

Dave: We don't have a P.O. box at the moment, so just email us at themess@hiretsukan.com for a current address.

CARBONAS

GREG: SINGER DAVE: DRUMS CLAY: GUITAR JESSE: BASS JOSH: GUITAR

INTERVIEWED BY BOBBI UBANGI & ALIX LID

MRR (Bobby): ...They're called tonsil stones...and what it is, it's dead flesh that gets stuck in your tonsils and bacteria attaches to it and you hack it up.

MRR (Alix): Alright so has anyone ever had smelly vomit like things coming out of their throat?

MRR (Ubangi): You know, white chunky cauliflower like things....

Dave: Yes.

Jesse: Yes.

Greg: Yes. I am Greg.

MRR (Ubangi): Clay, Josh?

Clay: I don't think so.

Josh: ....

MRR (Ubangi): OK, first question — Why does Dave look like shit?

Greg: I'll field that one. Point the tape recorder at me. Have you ever seen that movie *Super Size Me*? That guy's a fucking wimp, Dave's done that shit for 28 years. That's why he looks like shit.

MRR (Ubangi): Technically, Dave doesn't look like shit.

Dave: Inside joke.

MRR (Ubangi): Two new records planned—are there any recording plans in the future?

Josh: The future is now.

Dave: We record all the time.

Greg: We record all the time, because Dave has an 8-track.

MRR (Alix): So why do your releases come out years after they're recorded?

Greg: Because people are assholes.

Dave: Because I spend years mixing and remixing everything.

MRR (Ubangi): So what's the new big thing in porn? Cutting edge stuff.

Dave: Stop the tape for a second.

MRR (Alix): No, just answer.

Dave: ......

MRR (Alix): So what happened to your last interview?

Jesse: Jared lost the tape recorder with the tape in it.

Greg: Because Clay wouldn't stop talking.

MRR (Ubangi): Who's your favorite close talker?

Greg: Clay, of course....I wouldn't want anyone else's whiskers rubbing my ears.

(2 Minutes of Inaudible Mumbling)

MRR (Ubangi): Who was your favorite person to kick out of the band—me, Will, or Jeremy?

Greg: Well, OK, technically BJ, you're the only one we kicked out. Will moved to Japan and Jeremy moved to Chicago.

MRR (Alix): Talk about Douchemaster.

Greg: Douchemaster.

MRR (Alix): Tell us about your infiltrations with Douchmaster.

Carbonas: Infiltrations???

MRR (Alix): Where does the douche infiltrate?

Clay: Somebody read the dictionary today.

Dave: You mean somebody *didn't* read the dictionary today.

Greg: Lately we haven't infiltrated much. Not too much. Like OK, Douchemaster right.

MRR (Alix): Affiliation, asshole.

Greg: Ok Douchemaster is me and this asshole named Brian, he's a total piece of shit. I hate him.

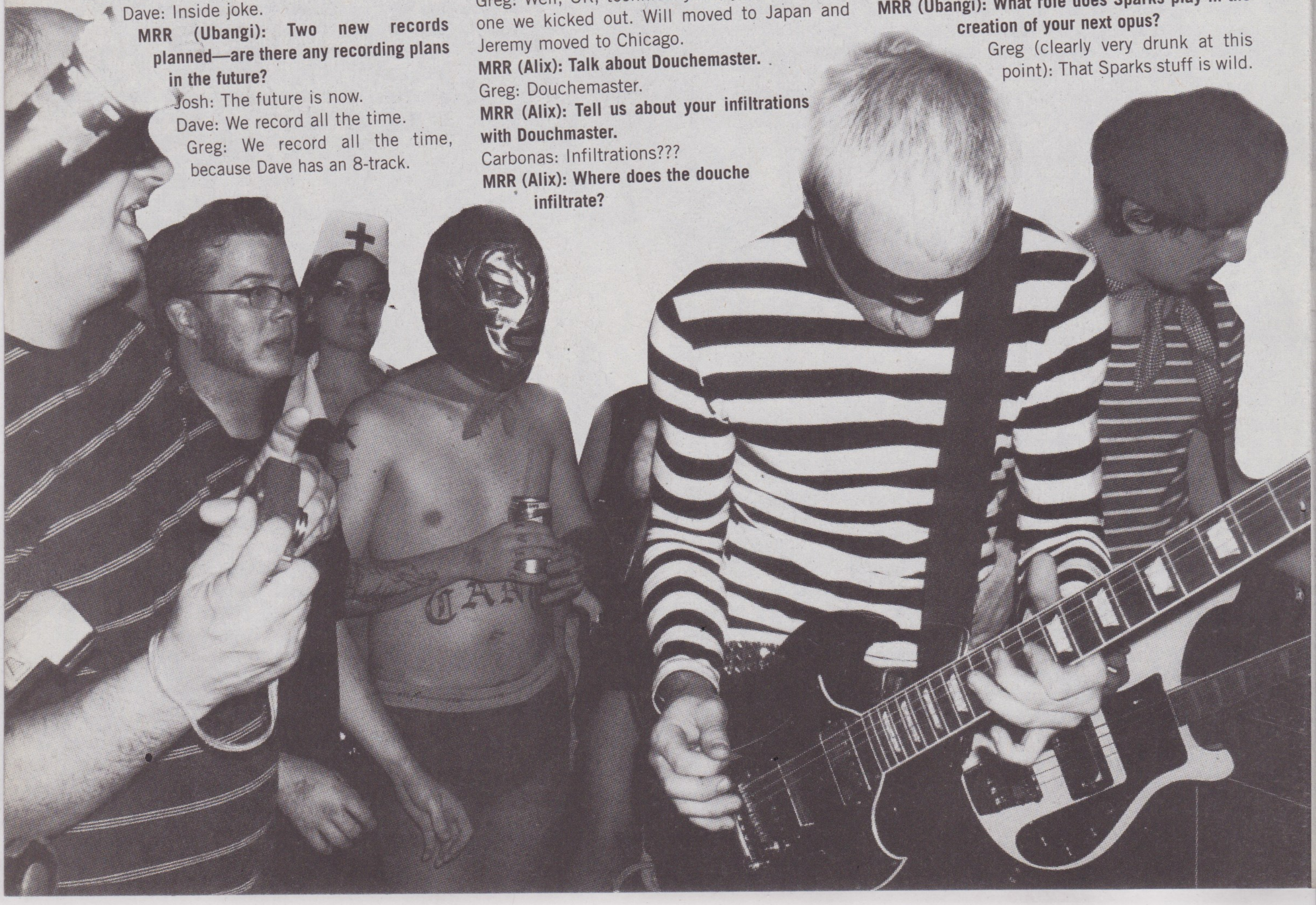
MRR (Ubangi): Tell us about Brian.

Greg: Brian is actually a decent person. Good looking guy, cleans up real nice, has a couple of weiner dogs, you know. Anyway we put out really terrible records, the worst records to come out of Atlanta in 15 years...Carbonas *Frothing at the Mouth* 7", which is out of print. Beat Beat Beat, Josh's other band—we put that out. We're gonna do a 7" for our old bass player Jeremy's new band from Chicago, the Busy Signals. We're doing a joint release with Die Slaughterhaus for the Frantic LP. Our, uh, motto is—Don't Expect Quality: Douchemaster.

(3 MINUTES OF UNPRINTABLE QUESTIONS...)

MRR (Ubangi): What role does Sparks play in the creation of your next opus?

Greg (clearly very drunk at this point): That Sparks stuff is wild.



I have to say that when I drink beer now I have to do speed or something or else when I drink coffee I have to drink beer, cuz I need Sparks. It's everything at once.

Jesse: Word for word.

Everyone in the room: ???

MRR (Alix): So Mitch Cardwell is putting out your record, how did you guys get hooked up with him?

Josh: OK—you know, I have no idea.

Clay: Well, we always sent him our new recordings and he liked them all.

Greg: Mitch Cardwell is one of the few people who likes our band, we had a couple of people interested in putting out the record, but it didn't really pan out, as it were. So we finally just had to say, "Hey Mitch, will you put it out?" We had to ask him to do it.

Dave: We only sent the record to like three people.

Greg: True.

Greg: Mitch agreed to put it out, since Megaforce and Combat passed on it. Next question...

MRR (Alix): ....uh....

Greg: You're like a deer in headlights.

MRR (Ubangi): So do you feel like you have a.....uh....sub, suh, substantial, boy that's a tough word, substantial lineup, uh lineup where this will stand for at least a month or two?

Greg: I'm skating on thin ice. But yes.

MRR (Alix): What ever happened to your stingers, Dave?

Greg: What's the most important thing to do during a stinger? *Maintain eye contact.*

Dave: Yes, eye contact is very important. A good stinger can be quickly soured if the rest of the band isn't "feeling it." More importantly, don't fuck with a man while he's stinging, i.e. bandmates muting cymbals in disgust. You gotta let a man sting.

Josh: Jesse, tell us about British Knights and what they mean to you.

Jesse: Well, they're affordable, you'll run faster, you'll look better—but they don't make them like they used to. They're the Cadillac of shoes.

Greg: Just like the Red Wiggler is the Cadillac of worms.

[...conversation degenerates into 7 seperate tangents]

MRR (Ubangi): Jesse, tell us about pookie.

Jesse: Pookie Jones, RIP, he died of cat cancer....

Greg: It was cat fucking syphilis, don't lie!

[A few more minutes of inaudible chatter]

MRR (Ubangi): Dave, I loved you man, we're bros, it's not like I'm a primadonna, why didn't you answer my calls for four months after I said you looked like shit?

Dave: BJ, I hardly call my own mother back...don't take it personally.

MRR (Ubangi): I have a viable question....at this point...

Josh: BJ, can you make me a cheeseburger?

MRR (Ubangi): I'm not at work. I have a viable question—(takes shots of whiskey in Odin's honor)

Greg: Here's to Odin

MRR (Ubangi): I have a viable question...this is intelligent...at this point, do you feel...(takes about five minutes to spit it out)...at this point...are you trying to lead towards an influence, or are you trying to have your own sound?

Greg: Uh..well, we're not going into this trying to "reinvent the wheel." I guess we just let it happen naturally, if we end up developing our own sound then cool, we totally steal from other bands though, just like every band has ever done in the history of music.

MRR (Ubangi): (again takes quite a while to formulate his question)...do you feel like the Carbonas are referencing a certain time period?

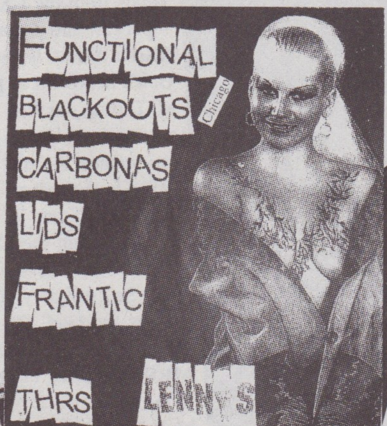
[conversation again degenerates into 10 minutes of arguing]

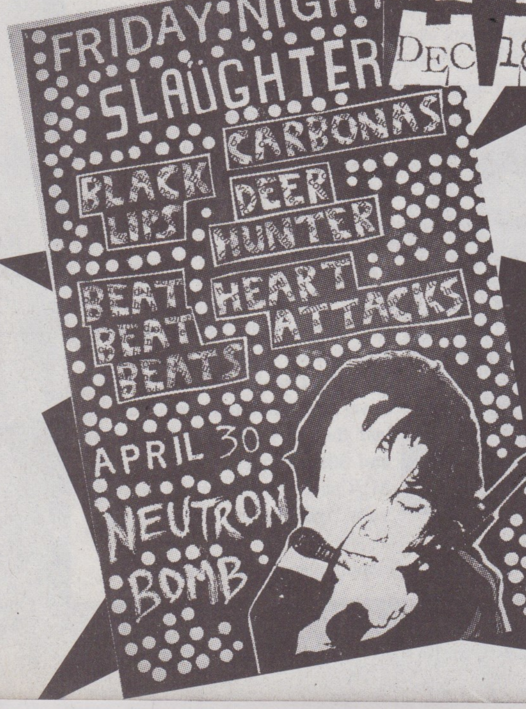
Josh: We all generally like the same stuff, late 70s to early 80s punk and powerpop...which is pretty broad.

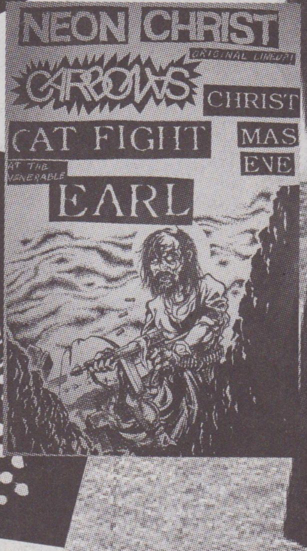
[Ubangi has passed out]

Greg: Uh, I guess that's it.

CARBONAS
CARBONAS!
CARBONAS







ohuzaru

Italy's own distorted hyper-thrash unit, Ohuzaru, is set to take America's nads and crush 'em to dust in June 2005. If you don't know who they are yet, you will by the end of the summer. They have a new LP/CD coming out on 625/Agipunk that absolutely rips. Thrash on, nerds...

Interview by Jensen

MRR: Who are you? Why should people want to know your band?

M: Hi, we are Ohuzaru, we come from Venezia (Italy). We are: Alberto (bass), Marco (guitar), Giorgio (guitar), Buraz (drums) and me (Marco) on vox. I don't know why people should want to know us and I don't know why you're asking me this. Ha! Maybe it's because we have a bunch of records out, maybe 'cause we are from Italy, the country that gave us Raw Power, Wretched, Negazione, blah blah blah...who knows??

MRR: Why did you start Ohuzaru and what music influenced you to do it?

M: Me and Alberto have played punk rock since we were teenaged werewolves, but we wanted to play also in a band influenced by old bands like Agnostic Front, early Madball, Wretched, Gorilla Biscuits, Minor Threat, etc. When we started to play we also began to discover a lot of underground bands that played in genres we had never heard before: crust, grind, and powerviolence. I still remember when, during an Intensity gig in 1999, Rodrigo gave me a bunch of 7"s that he released on his Putrid Filth Conspiracy (Last Security, Accursed, Kontrovers, Victims, Man In Shackles etc). I was so stoked on these records! Because of this, I bought other records by Swedish bands like Outlast, Section 8, and Nasum. When we composed the songs of our first 7", we only listened to Swedish bands! Crazy! We also recorded a cover of a song by Bonds Of Trust. We played our first gig with Within Reach and our first couple of gigs around Italy with Last Security and Intensity. It probably would have been better if all of us were born in Sweden. At that time we didn't know anything about the American DIY scene and American bands like Infest, Crossed Out, and Spazz.

MINOR THREAT

MRR: You say you should have been from Sweden and that you listened to all the Swedish music at first. Then you found powerviolence. Do you like powerviolence more than the Swedish stuff now? Or do you still prefer the Swedish records?

M: Swedish crust was one of my first loves. I listen to it a little less but I still buy any new records by Victims and Skitsystem! As for powerviolence? Yeah, there are a lot of awesome new bands: Machine Gun Romantics, Threatener, Widespread Bloodshed, etc. So I still like both genres, but now I listen more punk rock and old school HC.

MRR: What sort of experience do you hope to gain from touring in the U.S.?

M: We're looking forward to meet people that we've been in touch for several years, meet new friends, see awesome bands and places we've only seen in John Wayne movies.

MRR: Did Ohuzaru split up and then reform? Why? What did L'Amico Di Martucci have to do with it?

M: After the European tour in 2001, we thought to continue playing without Dudu, our ex-singer. We're still friends (Alberto and Buraz still play with him in Gonna Fall Hard) but we wanted to grow in different ways. We were looking for a new singer but didn't find one, so we decided to focus on other bands and projects: Alberto and me played in L'Amico Di Martucci and Marco in Nab (grindcore). When L'Amico Di Martucci broke up, we wanted to restart Ohuzaru. We are still good friends and we wanted to play together with Giorgio, so...why not? I also decided to start singing instead of playing drums. That's when Buraz joined Ohuzaru.

MRR: I remember there being a big rivalry between northern and southern Italians. Does this carry over into the punk scene?

M: I don't see any form of rivalry between northern and southern Italy. A bunch of kilometers separate the "two scenes," so that the "two scenes" are not really in touch with each other. It's a bit weird — foreign bands comin' on tour never reach south Italy, and even most of the Italian bands who go on tour all across Europe never play there, Ohuzaru included. The southern-most city we played in was Rome (in middle-Italy), but it would be great to reach the "wild, wild south."

MRR: You have a new LP coming out on 625. How is it compared to your first couple of records?

M: Since we recorded the last Ohuzaru stuff, four years have passed by. During this time we listened to a lot of bands from the US, Brazil, and Japan. The new LP is super raw and distorted!

MRR: What is your worst tour experience ever? Don't be afraid to point fingers and name names.

M: During our first Euro tour we burned the engine of my van, so I had to pay a lot of money to buy a brand new engine in order to finish the tour and to return to Italy. On the second tour (the one with Remains Of The Day) we all got ill. We had to cancel some Swedish shows. During the L'Amico Di Martucci tour someone stole a lot of things from the van: cameras, money, and bags. So I can only point my finger against those fuckin' thieves and God! On all the tours we've done, we came back with lots of good experiences and moments of joy!

MRR: Speaking of joy, how do you feel about the pope dying?

M: Personally I don't give a fuck about the dead pope. He was just a man, as old as the hills, controlled by others of the Vaticano...I'd surely have preferred Berlusconi to die.

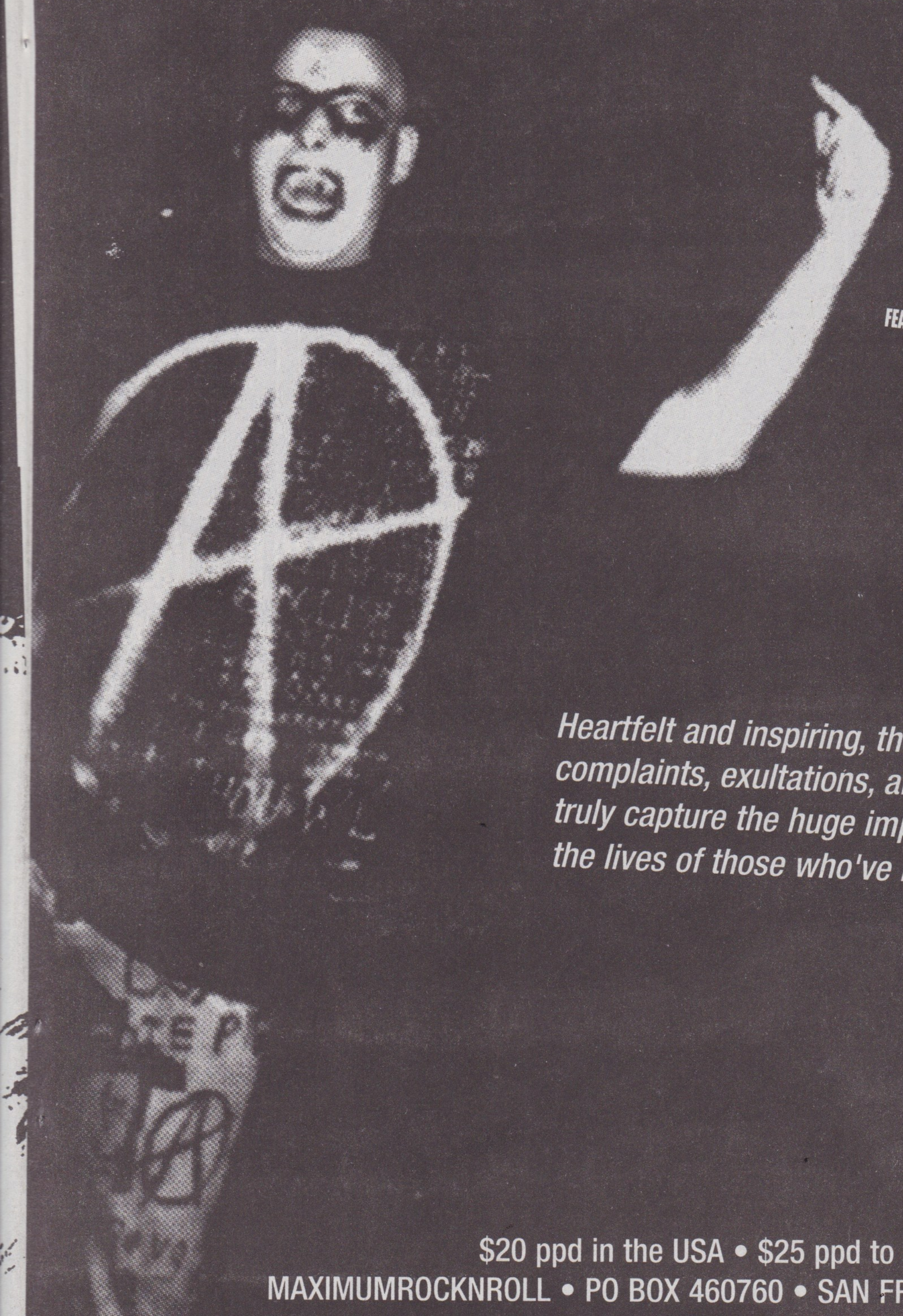
MRR: From what I have read, Berlusconi is a lot like our current president. How is Silvio Berlusconi's reign affecting you personally and the punk scene in Italy?

M: Musically not at all, except for the lyrics. In everyday life, it pisses me off 'cause criminals—politicians—can walk our streets with more power than we can imagine. They control 90% of the media.

MRR: Thanks Marco. Do you have any warnings, requests, or last thoughts to share before we end this interview?

M: Thank you Jensen for the interview. And what can I say other than see you on tour!

If you want contact us: slyactions@hotmail.com, www.ohuzaru.tk



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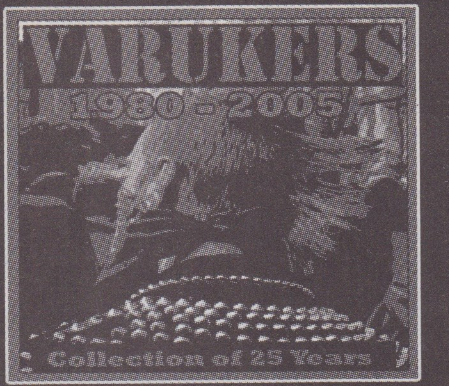
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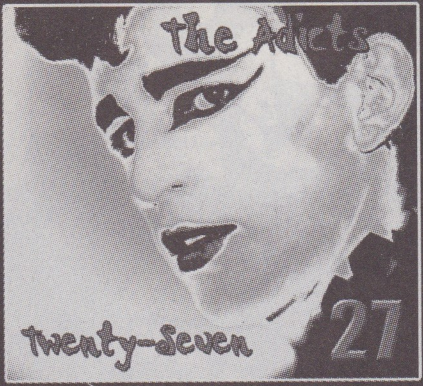
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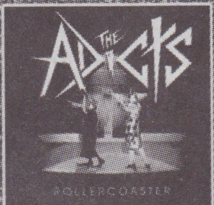
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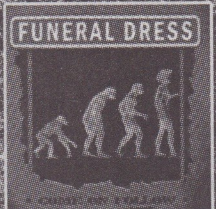
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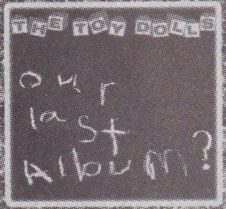
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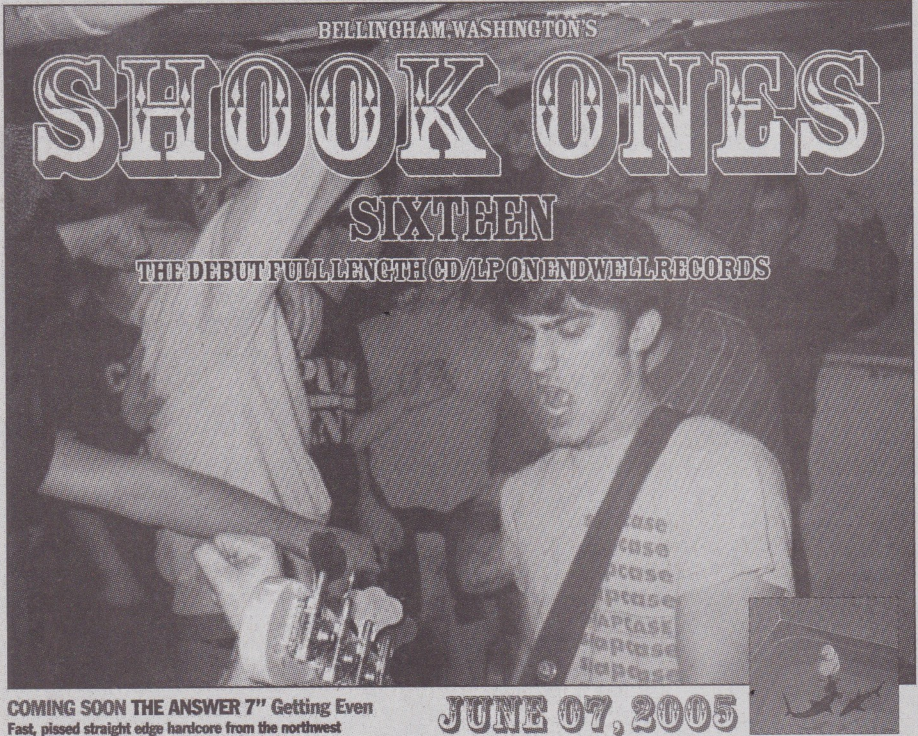

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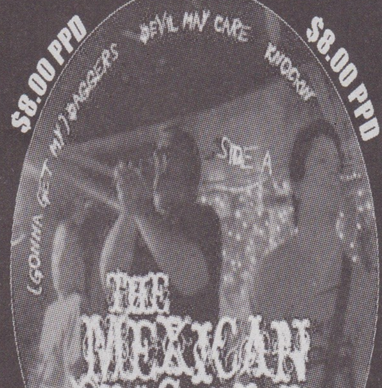
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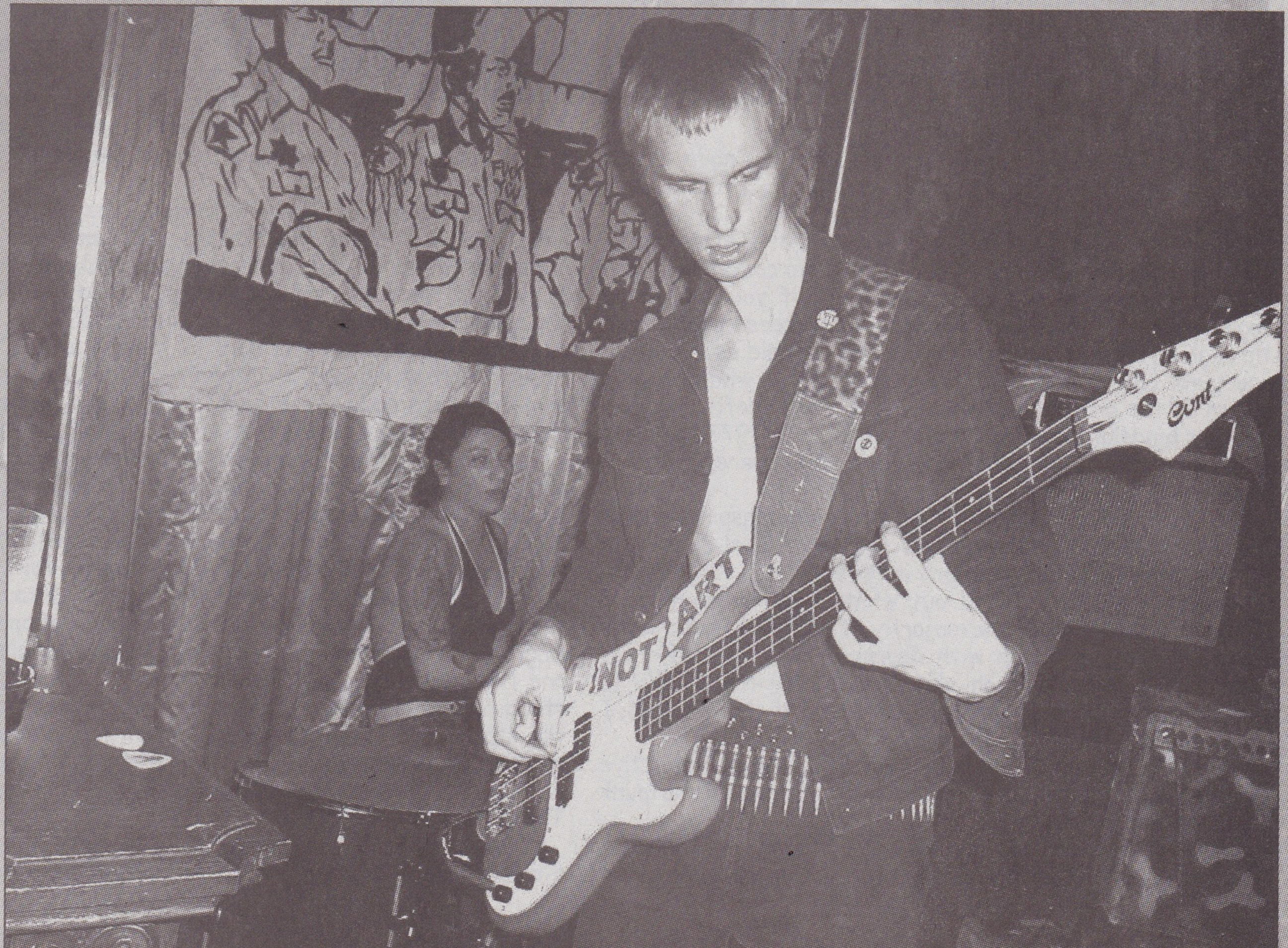
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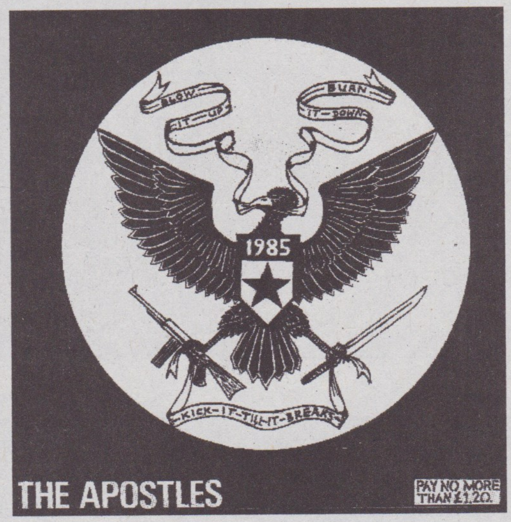
THE APOSTLES

SMASH THE SPECTACLE · The Story of the Apostles

By Lance Hahn

Andy Martin is a bit of an enigma in the history of anarcho punk. First of all, his politics tended to run left of the anarchos. Though he would later deny that his heart was with it, he associated himself as a Marxist Leninist and was a member of groups that also supported Mao Tse Tung thought. At the same time, he never considered the band to be political. His slicing ability to call the anarcho scene on its own bullshit should have been accepted, but instead got him uninvited to the party. In addition, he and other members were openly gay, and in the 80s the anarcho punk scene was still too conservative with regards to homophobia to accept that. His politics, both personal and otherwise, were a source of constant intrigue from spectators as well as from within.



While his connection to punk rock at the time may have been similar to that of many young people in England in the late 70s, his ability to assess the situation was accurate.

Andy Martin: "The promises and plans of the first wave of punk lay in tattered rags by 1979 and any young people who still believed that such youth subculture contained the seeds of revolt and rebellion had to replant their hopes in a severely modified form."

An encounter with Crass at this time in Ongar, Essex piqued his interest in the newly developing anarcho punk scene.

Martin: "I didn't meet a punk band—I met a dozen black-clad idealists who were far too intelligent to convincingly pull off the punk band set. It doesn't work if you can string together more than two coherent sentences—people see through it, apart from those who are as stupid as the average punk band... But then the second wave, what became known as the anarcho punk scene, had the benefit of other people's hindsight: the faults and mistakes of 1977 were not to be repeated." (Ah, but they were, they were—more on that later).

While the meeting might have been some inspiration for his joining the Apostles, he was frankly cynical about the band's potential and aspirations in 1979.

Martin: "When I found out what Crass believed in, I became convinced that the majority of youth in Thatcherite Britain would just laugh with derision—pacifism and anarchist utopia is it? Yet from virtual obscurity in mid-1979 to national recognition a year later, they and their fans (yes, I do mean 'fans') proved me wrong."

In 1981, Martin's political motivations and instinctive affinity with counter-culture led him to the anarcho punk scene and to the Apostles.

Martin: "I joined a punk band called the Apostles in 1981. I was a member of the (ahem) Revolutionary Communist Party and frankly believed in very little Marxism, not because I was cynical or stupid, but because I realized that most human beings are so brutish, selfish, and greed-ridden that they need leaders and the firm hand of a benevolent controller to stop them from tearing each other's throats out in an orgy of humanity."

But to say that his main reason for joining the band was entirely altruistic would be misleading.

Martin: "I didn't join the Apostles to preach a new polemic to people of the new proletariat—I joined the Apostles to locate and secure a girlfriend or four—I was fed up with being both lonely and celibate. Being physically ugly and partially disabled I realized that the only way to find girlfriends was to fake it—the old pop group routine works very well and is so much simpler to play than the film star set or the sportsman set. You can practice in the comfort of your own home, those of you lucky enough to have homes. It didn't work for me, of course, because I went and spoilt it by being honest and sincere—what a loser I was in those halcyon days, when just one more record on Crass Records would bring about the revolution tomorrow, that is, after your giro has arrived."

Personal or otherwise, the one binding factor for the band was their commitment to change.

Martin: "The other members of the band wanted to change society. I just wanted to change myself. I can't say that they or I were right or wrong."

Within months of the band forming, they recorded their first cassette release. Self-titled, the demo was recorded outside of a studio. That year, the band also appeared on the *Composed Banana* compilation tape along with Conflict, Omega Tribe, Zounds, and more. During this cassette heyday, that compilation was said to have sold 2,500 copies. From this first release, the band took the positions of support for more radical and revolutionary groups believing in violent opposition to racism, sexism, and homophobia.

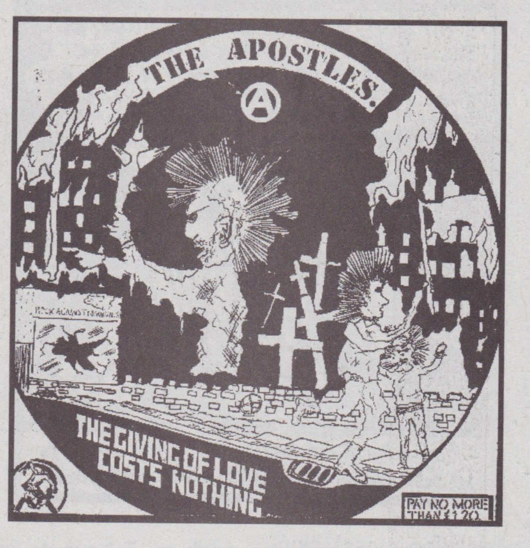
Martin: "Being neither a punk, an anarchist, nor a pacifist, it is perhaps strange that I should have occasionally supported and even worked with Crass. However, as I hinted earlier, I was a communist who refused to toe the party line; this meant that I could work with people toward a commonly agreed goal. This was lost on the fans, of course. From the group's first cassette to its last album, I supported The Angry Brigade, armed insurrection against capitalist states, and the education and politicization of the working class. I stood for gay rights, feminist issues, and took an openly hostile stance against all forms of racism (i.e. not just white racism). Our position was both revolutionary and warlike. *Je ne regret rien*. We were often naive. We were never gullible. There's a distinct difference."

However, by 1982, the anarcho punk scene was becoming a closed party. Critique even from within wasn't especially welcome, and different ideas, though "toward a commonly agreed goal," were enough for your band to be quietly blackballed.

Martin: "However, because our group refused to participate in the factions and sectarian hatreds that prevailed in the scene, and even more because we refused to identify with any of the separate branches of punkdom, we were ostracized and alienated from almost every sphere of influence and activity. Very few people supported or assisted our work. A large minority actually tried to hinder it. They were only occasionally successful—they won a few battles but we won the war!"

Despite that, the band found 1982 to be one of their busiest years. Over the course of the year, they would play a few gigs and put out three cassette releases (none of which were studio recordings) titled *The Second Dark Age, Libertarian Propaganda,* and *Topics For Discussion.*

During this time, the band also got together their first vinyl release. Their first 7", *Blow it Up, Burn it Down, Kick it Til it Breaks!* was an example of their commitment to revolutionary political action. But also it showed their understanding of the history of terrorist activity in the name of anarchism in Britain.



The record's title was borrowed from a main quote from one of the Angry Brigade's famous communiqués from the early 70s. A radical anarchist group, they were partially inspired by leftist "terrorist" groups in the late 60s and 70s, like the Weather Underground and Baader-Meinhoff, and partly inspired by the Situationist International. Their tactics were mostly focused around bombings, sometimes targeting individuals for assassination and other times acting in response to world events. Like other radical groups of the time, they felt that they were part of the revolutionary struggle and at war. The violence they saw as part of being at war, and not as terrorism.

Surrounded by pacifist peace punks, the Apostles felt compelled to take the less traveled revolutionary path at the time.

Martin: "The perils which afflict a revolutionary communist surrounded by punks can be most eloquently expressed when a cold night in 1982 is summoned from memory: six bands were to play that night and Conflict were top of the bill. Myself and a colleague from The Wapping Autonomy Centre, Ian Slaughter, were irritated to the point of petrol bombs. These punks shouted about revolution as they punched the air with their fists, but frankly, the temporary displacement of a few nitrogen molecules isn't going to drastically hasten the demise of Western capitalism. Ian and I decided to give the revolution a little assistance, since in England it is a truism that in order to effect political change, you have to blow it up, bum it down, and kick it until it breaks.

"Ian telephoned the local police to say that trouble was about to erupt at that damned squatted school on Westbourne Park Road, and would they come along with shields and truncheons, please? Meanwhile, I went round members of the audience to harass them into action. The police are about to arrive with the express purpose of the immediate cessation of festivities here, arm yourselves and prepare for battle (just like the Conflict lyrics). By the end of the band's set, I'd succeeded in the eventual arousal of at least two hundred angry, frustrated punks and skinheads, so that as Ian's signal they rushed towards the stairwell which led down to the playground. The gig hall was on the fourth floor and I led my troops from the front. By the time I rushed out into the cold night air, I'd lost two-thirds of my battalion, and by the time I reached the front gates, three-quarters of my remaining platoon had vanished inexplicably into the darkness. I was beside myself with rage. Ian saw what had happened and was so furious that he hurled a house brick at a police van that happened to pass at this point. The projectile made a beautiful arc through the indigo sky, caught the rays of an amber street light, and resounded against the side of the van with a most satisfying 'whump' before it bounced off the metal and split into fragments on the pavement. One of the policemen glanced out of the window briefly—then he turned his gaze back to the road ahead. The van didn't even slow down. That, ladies and gentlemen, was the punk riot of Westbourne Park Road.

"As the punks gradually rounded themselves up and sauntered merrily off down the road, Ian strutted after them, trotted alongside the assorted ragbag of reluctant rebels and grabbed various individuals at random.

"'Come on you scum, you filth—fight! We can smash shop windows, wreck the town, come on! What's the fucking matter with you?' he yelled in bitter frustration at the confused and bewildered glances of the punks. One young lad actually replied (and these are his exact words): 'No, sorry. I have so go to work tomorrow.' I sat on the steps with my head in my hands. Yes, that was the punk riot of Westbourne Park Road."

The Apostles being misunderstood was taken to its apex the following year. With the release of another cassette (*Swimmers in the Sea of Life*) and two more 7"s (*Rising from the Ashes* and *The Curse of the Creature*), the band's very political nature was called into question. With a lot of the band's literature of a political nature (and they were known by then for having a considerable amount of literature with each release), Andy Martin's background as a revolutionary communist certainly came across in many ways. Of course, to a sea of punks who were now conditioned to the "anarchy and peace" of the scene, these different ideas were looked at as antagonistic. In all truth, they probably were, to a large degree, as Martin was certainly a good agitator. His agitation was a mixture of personal despair and acquired knowledge from contact with radical ideas as a youth. His interest was tempered with a healthy dose of critique.

Martin: "Yes, we were all rather too political in those days; that way we didn't need to look too closely at who—and what—we really were. I was lonely, a short and rather ugly young man who'd never had a girlfriend and joined a punk band as a possible means to further his career in amorous adventures. I lived in Stoke Newington in a house designated 'women only' by April Housing Co-op, but since I was one of the three people who originally set up that co-op, and since I was homeless, the four women occupants decided that it was better I should live in their attic than be on the streets. I agreed with them.

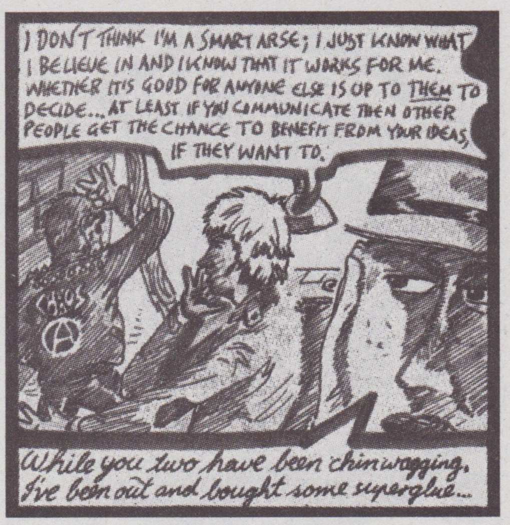
The Apostles.

(...continued)

"From the start of 1981 until the end of 1982, I learnt a lot about feminism and the women's struggle. I also learnt that the loudest, most fanatical, and unreasonable feminist elements were also those who tended to be male and sexually promiscuous. Ridden with guilt and desperate to prove their political credibility, such people required an enemy... rather like the RCP and other psychiatric socialists. The female variety of feminist who hates men but only actually practices feminism on every third Friday is the reason the women's movement has progressed so slowly. Tabloid journalism is the reason most other women and most men know nothing about either feminism or how male and female bodies actually work."

As well as an understanding of feminism and sexism which was a lot less common then people remember in the early '80s, Martin also had a keen understanding of racial issues and how the organized left wing related to it (or didn't relate to it) at the time.

Martin: "I was a member of the Revolutionary Communist Party (Marxist Leninist) because I was a revolutionary and it took at least six weeks for me to appreciate that Asians and Afro-Caribbeans really don't need a band of middle class liberal Tupperware terrorists ridden with white guilt to fight their battles for them and lead them on to socialism. Picture the evening vigilante squads I joined after I'd actually left the party—a gang of seething Asians who guarded their (capitalist) concerns (shops) from vicious racially motivated attacks by (working class) skinheads and fascist thugs (also working class) with me as the token whitey because I was opposed to racism and couldn't care less whether my brothers and sisters had read *Das Kapital* or not. That these angry Asians accepted me doesn't mean that I'm anyone special—but it does mean that they knew what the RCP was and that they resented being used by a party which is probably as racist as ever was the National Front."


I DON'T THINK I'M A SMART ARSE; I JUST KNOW WHAT I BELIEVE IN AND I KNOW THAT IT WORKS FOR ME. WHETHER IT'S GOOD FOR ANYONE ELSE IS UP TO THEM TO DECIDE... AT LEAST IF YOU COMMUNICATE THEN OTHER PEOPLE GET THE CHANCE TO BENEFIT FROM YOUR IDEAS, IF THEY WANT TO.
CRASS
While you two have been chinwagging, I've been out and bought some superglue...

But despite these obviously left-wing ideas, the band was considered to be ideologically opposed to the anarcho punk scene. By not following guidelines created by the fans in the image of Crass, the band became more and more vilified. Even *Maximum Rocknroll* claimed that they might possibly be fascist.

Aside from the narrow and often elitist attitudes of many of the punks at the time, another big problem is one that will probably always exist: nobody understands irony.

In many cases, Andy Martin would be making ironic statements to point out the absurdity of him being called a fascist.

In *Maximum Rocknroll* he would say, "I have been referred to as a 'closet fascist,' which is absurd because I've never been closeted about my right-wing views..." It would seem obvious that he was kidding and being ironic especially when he sweetly name-checks those who had accused him in the next line.

Also, it is important to understand that there was a certain degree of pretension in what the Apostles did. There was a grandiose writing style at times that would almost seem theatrical. Whether he ever said it or not, Andy Martin surely must have thought of himself as being something of an intellectual vanguard in the revolution. While that made him misunderstood it would inevitably turn his critiques to genuine dislike for the very audience he was attempting to communicate with. Shakespeare couldn't solve that problem, so there's no reason to think the Apostles would. The result was that in becoming a microcosm of society, the peace punk audience had also become "the rabble."

Martin: "The scene provided a forum for fanzines and bands to express the views of Crass; individuals rarely had the opportunity to be recognized. If you didn't produce a product then you weren't generally acknowledged. This is regrettable, although not entirely avoidable, since bands and fanzines have names and images that are easily assimilated into the social awareness of the scene members, while individuals possess no obvious manifestation of their existence outside of their own bodies. The views expressed and promoted by all these bands and fanzines rarely strayed from the anarchist-pacifist line. On the other hand, those purveyors of Oi and 'street-level punk' (The Exploited, GBH, Discharge, etc.) had so little to say that provided that you were white and heterosexual, you were generally acceptable. The third branch were far more tolerant of unusual views and different ideas, which meant that it was the one branch of punk that survived with at least a modicum of credibility as its diverse nemesis fostered both intellectual debate and strength of character among its adherents. For the rest, punk was little more than a fashion. I have to include the Crass fans in that last sentence as these days the only people who still adhere in both word and deed to what Crass promoted, seem to be... Crass. They were honest and genuine—most of their fans were neither."

While in hindsight it's really impossible to argue with what Martin is saying, it's easy to understand how he was always operating as an agitator. Of course, agitators are political in general and the Apostles would have a hard time balancing it with their artistic ambitions.

Around the same time, harassment started coming from other areas, as it was becoming more and more known that Andy and guitarist/bassist Dave Fanning were gay.

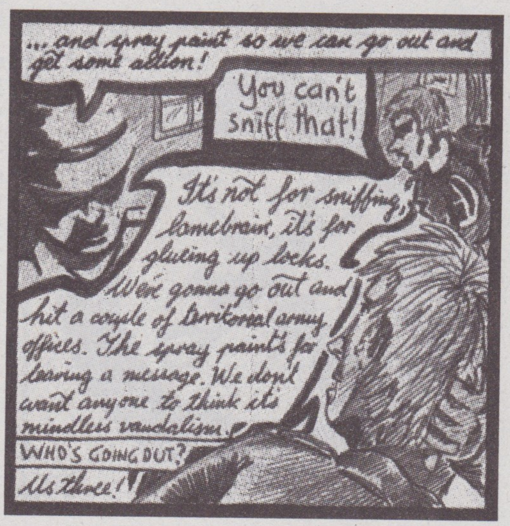
Fanning said in a 1989 interview with *Homocore*, "There's bound to have been some who have been put off by our sexuality and its effect on the content of our work. For instance, during one of our live performances at the Recession Klub in 1983, after doing the biographical ballad 'Interference,' someone in the audience who had obviously turned up to see Hagar The Womb and not us was heard to comment, 'Well, I see the Apostles are still queer.' Obviously an exponent of the 'passing phase' theory."

Martin said in that same interview, "Punks and anarchists are notoriously conservative. Strangely, it seems that our sexual orientation has not discouraged American people from writing to us, nor from buying our records and cassettes. Could it be that Americans are generally less prejudiced than their British counterparts? Also, it's worth mentioning that we now receive more letters from Scotland than from anywhere else in the world. So, is libertarianism more advanced in my homeland, or is everyone gay there? No, I think it is more likely to be the former! This surprises me, however, as the popular image of Scottish people involves a masculine and very conservative people. Evidently this is a myth although I dare say Rangers and Celtic fans have a good selection of queer-bashers in them, but you know what they say about queer-bashers..."

Surprisingly, there was even some snickering about the band members' sexuality from hardcore anarchist sectors.

Also from *Homocore*, Dave: "Yeah, Margaret of the famous anarchist Black Flag collective once commented, 'I hear the Mob and the Apostles are living in the same house; probably spend all their time up each others' bums, ha ha ha,' etc."

Unfortunately, talk turned to action on the side of the band's foes in early 1984. In February of that year, the band's house was firebombed, and much of their materials and all of their musical instruments went up in smoke. Though it was never proven, members of the National Front were largely suspected.


...and spray paint so we can go out and get some action!
You can't sniff that!
It's not for sniffing, lamebrain, it's for glueing up locks. We're gonna go out and hit a couple of Territorial army offices. The spray paint's for leaving a message. We don't want anyone to think it's mindless vandalism.
WHO'S GOING OUT?
Us three!

The result was that aside from setting the band back in its progress, Andy was left homeless and wound up being adopted by some London squatters whom he had only just met. Two of his new roommates, Olly and Martin, recorded what would become the Apostles' fourth EP, much to the chagrin of Dave and Chris, whose equipment it was that got burned in the fire. That record, *The Giving of Love Costs Nothing*, turned out to be more of a solo record for Andy Martin. He considered it a completely personal statement at the time.

Martin, in a letter to *Maximum Rocknroll:* "I don't know what you'll make of it (Dave hates it and intends to say so on the fifth EP...), but here it is anyway. All the articles on the actual cover are by me, so please don't judge Chris, Dave, or Olly and Martin by the contents of either the cover or the record, as the whole project was easily one of the most personal things I've done so far—so much so that it would be self-indulgent in parts. I don't know; it's too early for me to judge yet."

By the summer, the proper band had regrouped and was able to record a sixth demo tape called, *Will I Ever Be Free?* But the band still found itself answering to controversy all through the year.

Martin said in that July's *Maximum Rocknroll,* "I detest the recent influx of American television programmes that have recently plagued this land with their endless Police hero third rate, overacted drama progs, their comedy shows with the mansion and bi-ig cars and ever overflowing fridges full of pizzas and hamburgers and coffee. BUT—I detest them because they are a product of a disgusting, decadent society based on greed and callousness, NOT simply because they are 'American'. This is the difference between us and The Exploited: they don't differentiate between what is the product of a nations' state and the disaffected minorities within that nation. I don't believe you like cop drama series any more than we do. Perhaps I can see more realism in *The Sweeney* than *Starsky and Hutch*, but isn't it all basically the same programme dressed up differently and with different accents?"

Later in the same article: "Anarchist/political bands spend huge amounts of time, money and effort into being as rich and as famous as the very superstars they claim to detest. The first wave of punk bands in Britain has shown this to be true in a manner that was both obvious and sad. The present climate is none too healthy either. Everyone wants to be kind of radical, they want to receive letters and be the ones quoted in fanzines, they want to be recognized and they want to be important. Well, I say 'everyone' but I can believe (just) that there are maybe a few inspired, caring individuals with enough compassion and enough integrity to see this farce for the charade it undoubtedly is...

"How many anarchist, liberated and radical (what we'll call) British bands care about anything more than the length of their dreadlocks or the price of smack? Perhaps this is why I respect Skrewdriver more than most 'anarchist' bands. I prefer the lyrics of the latter but I prefer the honesty and the dedication of the former. Crass are genuine and they have myself and Dave's trust, admiration and respect and that, to a certain extent, is mutual. I can think of no other bands who are worth more than a wry smile and a knowing glance at the cash register."

While some people would say that the Apostles and Martin in particular strictly provocateurs and essentially rebels without a cause, the detailed responses in the *Maximum Rocknroll* interview showed very thoughtful idealists standing their own ground in the face of copycats and growing sycophantism of the anarcho scene. Yet the band still floundered in terms of popularity which considering their musical contemporaries seemed like a clear reflection on the band's content.

From the *Homocore* interview, Dave: "Various people have offered varied reasons why we are not very popular, most of which don't make sense. The charge against us that we can't play is odd, because songwriting and technical ability is at least as proficient as such groups as Napalm Death, Chelsea, and Crass, all of whom are very popular. The standard of our artwork and writing has improved vastly. So perhaps the real reasons lay in what we say more than how we say it. We've always been honest and open about our not-so-private lives. Art and life are wholly convertible propositions. Art is life. Life is art. One reflects the other and both develop together. Both are connected to the whole universe and therefore to every other living being. If someone wants to underplay their position in this arrangement by avoiding honesty, that is their decision. However, through our honesty, particularly in the area of our sexuality, we have come into contact with wholesome, interesting people willing to collaborate with us.

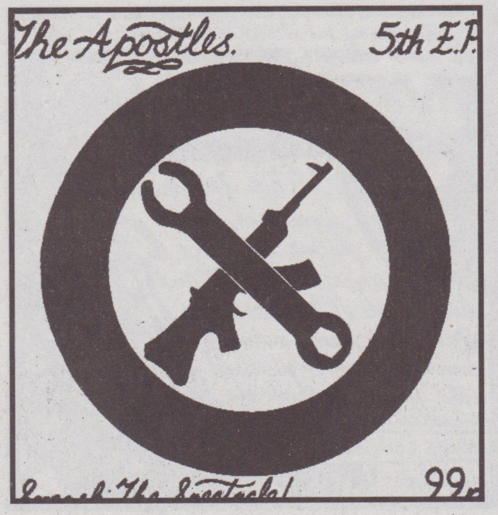
"It's quite logical that someone should 'come out' about being gay/partly gay to us before doing so with their friends because the anxiety of losing friends by coming out doesn't apply to some you've never met. When people write to us saying that they are having a hard time coming to terms with homosexual emotions they can be sure they are going to be taken seriously because they know by our lyrics/literature that we've had a hard time of it too. I seem to have strayed

THE APOSTLES (...continued)

from the original point somewhat. My last word on the question is that probably our reputation of being right-wing has put most people off."

While many remained dubious of the band's intentions, others came to the group's side and showed support. One new relationship was started with Conflict and their label, Mortarhate.

Smash The Spectacle is probably the most popular EP by the Apostles. The modest production values propel this record in all its changes, starting with in-your-face punk rock and ending with an introspective, almost folksy number with sparse percussion. The five-song EP of straightforward, raw punk starts with the incredible "Mob Violence," almost reminiscent of the UK Subs, with Martin's gruff and tuneful vocals and sing-along chorus. This song segues into the chiming guitar of "Anarchy, Peach & Freedom."


The Apostles.
5th E.P.
Smash The Spectacle!
99p

As can be imagined, the title is a bit ironic, with Martin always keen on not letting the anarcho scene get away with inconsistencies and redundancies.

Martin: "I hinted briefly at two reasons for the demise of the second wave of punk. The first of these is simple: instead of the adoption of a new, original, and intelligent pan aura (expressed through music, magazines, and visual arts), the anarcho punks opted for all the old clichés, tired routines, and fashionable formulae, as if to suggest that to breathe new life into those cracked models was enough to succeed where previously it had been shown to fail. Here are the basic areas, which were revealed to have been responsible for the inability of the new punk wave to meet the needs of young, alienated people who required a radical voice:

"1. The magazines took commercial examples as their model so that they consisted of a turgid diet of interviews with bands, feeble and often self-obsessed rants of a nebulous and usually indirect nature, inept layout, clumsy design, and amateur resources. This new punk wave was basically bereft of imagination.

"2. The bands behaved no differently to any other pop group in the commercial sense. They practiced, rehearsed, played concerts (called 'gigs,' a real rock-ist term) on a stage in front of an audience, often ended with an encore, posed, and strutted around like Led Zeppelin (but without the musical ability), and then pretended this was permissible because it was in the name of anarchism. What rot! The records obeyed a strict formula and so were lamentable in quality, predictable in content, and disposable in history. The covers frequently evoked all that is most despicable in egomania (the compulsory four members stand against a brick wall and look surly, a somber reflection upon their hopes for fame and stardom), or else displayed an obsession with death and masochism, which hardly promoted an attitude of libertarian optimism after all! Every track sounded the same: four-four time signature, vocal-guitar-bass-drums on each piece with lyrics that sounded as insincere as they were trite.

"3. The code of dress was strict, and woe betides those who dared to be different. In fairness, there were occasional bouts of individuality and imagination, but these were only barely tolerated by the majority. This applied only to the Crass and Oi fans, however. The glossy 'Punk Lives' types had only to look as ridiculous as possible to be accepted, which at least displayed a degree of spirit and attitude not found in the Crass and Oisters,

"If I appear unduly harsh in categories one and two it is because I still produce a magazine (*Smile*) and I'm still involved in a band (Academy 23); I take very seriously the art of communication. I believe with virtual fanaticism that one should do one's best; that whatever you do should be done to the best of your ability since it is an advertisement for you and affects other people. If you are involved in a magazine, take time, care, thought, imagination, and effort over the design and layout. Feature articles, essays, artwork and ideas that will be of interest and inspiration to the recipients of your work. Do we really all want to read yet another interview with the Creeping Nobodies from Heavy Metalville Lid? A band can be a vehicle for the education and enlightenment of the masses; it can be pure entertainment and yet provoke thought, discussion, and heightened awareness if only you'll allow it to do so. Instrumental works can often say more than vocal pieces. Vary the sound on a single, or especially, an album by having a track or two without drums, one for voice only, an instrumental or two, different time signatures, strange structures (i.e., not just verse-chorus-verse-chorus-guitar break-verse-chorus-chorus) and so on.

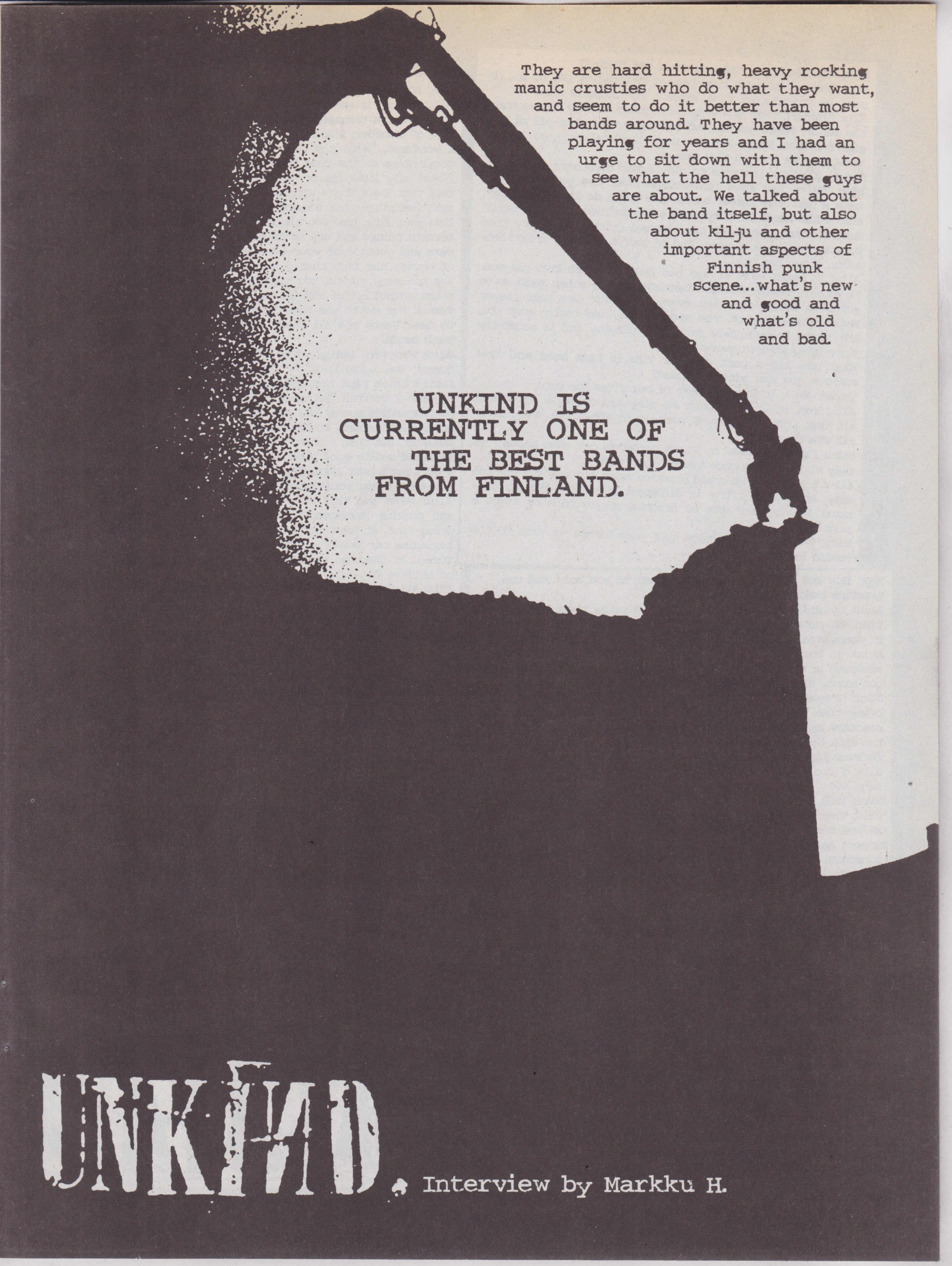
"Do we really need another song about nuclear war when the other four thousand haven't exactly achieved any change?"

The criticisms being made were certainly valid. The result was respect from many people on the inside of the anarcho scene. Conflict, being a major part of that movement, was certainly sympathetic to the Apostles' cause.

Martin, in *Homocore*: "This has been answered above, really, although it is worth mentioning that Conflict agreed to put out our fifth single. After that record's release, we made the fact that we are gay known to that group simply to see if the accusations about their being right-wing bigots was true. Their response? They offered to put out our first album for us.

"To our knowledge, no punk band has publicly slagged us down for being queer, but then we do have a reputation here for physically confronting prejudiced bigots (not altogether based upon fact, although are there plenty of punk bands ridiculing us for our sexuality but haven't the courage to openly admit it? I don't know."

1985 turned out to be an extremely prolific year for the band. Their first album was realized through Mortarhate, titled *Punk Obituary*. From that point until the end of the 80s, the Apostles existed in many different forms, releasing a staggering amount of material. By the time the band finally dissolved at the end of the decade, they had released five full-length LPs (a sixth, titled *Manifesto*, was only made available to the public in recent times), eight EPs, and sixteen album-length cassettes. Since their dissolution, Martin has kept musically busy with Academy 23 and now Unit. He has also continued to put his words to paper with the always-fascinating *Smile* publication (over twenty-five issues, at this point).



They are hard hitting, heavy rocking manic crusties who do what they want, and seem to do it better than most bands around. They have been playing for years and I had an urge to sit down with them to see what the hell these guys are about. We talked about the band itself, but also about kilju and other important aspects of Finnish punk scene...what's new and good and what's old and bad.

UNKIND IS CURRENTLY ONE OF THE BEST BANDS FROM FINLAND.

UNKIND.

Interview by Markku H.

MRR: When and why did you start the Unkind?

Saku (Drums): It must have been in the end of 1997 or so... it must be around that time, since I was under 18 then.

Allu (Guitar): This is a very hard question. Why did we start the band?? Maybe we started playing to get into all of the gigs for free. There are too many bands already, so I don't know why we started this one.

Tommi (Guitar): It's nice to play music together.

MRR: You've had some line-changes over the years and you have a new bass player again. How much do line-up changes affect the band? Do they have a big influence on the band?

Saku: I think our sound has changed quite a bit every time someone has come or gone. And of course it would affect bass solos, if we had any...

Allu: It seems we've always had bad luck with bass players. We've only really changed bassists. On the other hand we've gotten a better musician every time. Our new bass player Marko is really good. The previous guy was really good too, but Marko is definitely more into playing and is generally more interested in everything.

MRR: How big a part of your life is this band and how serious you are with the band?

Tommi: Well, it is a big part of our lives for sure.

Allu: Yep, it is a big part. We play and organize shows and all that shit. Somehow, it manages to affect our daily lives all the time.

Saku: I guess we need to stress ourselves out, even though we play shows maybe once every other week.

Allu: I just wish we could practice more, but now it's not too easy, since we all live in different cities. I'd like to play more. Now we are able to practice maybe once or twice a month...

Saku: We had one practice this year before we went to the studio in February.

MRR: How did you write the songs then, if you only had one practice before going into the studio?

Allu: I think all of us write riffs and bring them to practice. Then we just start playing the riffs we have. I think that's it, it doesn't take much more than that for us. We don't need to think it too much, it just happens. That might have been our weakness in the past as a band, that we didn't arrange the songs too much. What ever came out we kept it. And that was it.

Saku: It seems nowadays we finish the songs completely and then bring them to the practice. Before we just had a riff at the practice and then started playing and kept whatever came from the riff. No arranging. Now the one who has the riff in his head finishes the song pretty much by himself.

Allu: I don't think we've really turned down any songs or riffs, have we?

Saku: Well...I think some of my songs haven't been accepted.

Allu: That's true. Some of your songs are too rock 'n' roll for us, as you know.

Tommi: And some songs we just have stopped playing and kind of forgotten that we have ever wrote them.

Allu: At least we've tried all the riffs at some point to see how they work. It's normally Saku and Tommi who do the songs for us mostly.

MRR: Has it always been like that?

Allu: Yes, I think that's the way it has always been.

Tommi: I think Saku is writing more and more songs lately.

Allu: In fact I think Tommi wrote the most songs in the past. Janne is writing almost all the lyrics and now the new guy Marko has been writing some lyrics too, even though he is the new guy and has been in the band about a year so far.

Saku: Marko wrote lyrics for one new song, and a roommate of mine did one. Antti from Manifesto Jukebox wrote lyrics for a song on the previous record.

Allu: We don't have any rules about what Janne can write about, but I guess he kind of knows that we wouldn't like, if he wrote some stupid lyrics or total bullshit. I'd actually like to have all the lyrics in Finnish.

Tommi: That's the direction we are going already. I think there are more and more lyrics in Finnish all the time.

Allu: Janne can shout the Finnish lyrics more aggressively. It's more natural to him to scream in Finnish than in English of course. You don't need to think about the pronunciation or any of that crap.

MRR: What got you involved with punk rock in the first place?

Allu: For me it was very traditional. I got tapes from older guys when I was a teenager. The first tapes I got way back then were full of Disorder, Discharge, and all the other bands of that time. I wondered, "What the fuck is this noisy shit?!" It seemed to be total noise at the time for me, especially Disorder. Before that I was only listening to metal. I don't know how to explain the fact that I got stuck with punk rock. It's hard to explain. But it most definitely has something to do with the fact of how you live your life, how you choose to live your life and how you see certain things and try to do something about those things. Take care and control of your own life. The worst thing in metal is of course the fact that you can never take it seriously. There are too many clowns, too much posing, too much acting like rock stars, stupid lyrics and all that other bullshit.

Tommi: For me it was some kind of an accident. I just happened to hear Kaaos and all these other old classic Finnish hardcore punk bands.

Allu: You were really young when you started it...

Tommi: Yes, I was 13 or so, that's already about 15 years ago.

Saku: I think I got involved between sixth and seventh grade. That summer I started listening to punk and I started it all from skateboarding scene. You just saw all these magazines and videos at friends' houses. At the time it was some stupid skate punk bullshit, but then I heard bands like Minor Threat and some other real and really good punk bands.

MRR: I can't hear much Finnish influence in your music, so where you have taken your influences from?

Allu: We've had this vision from day one-we love to play heavy and rocking hardcore. I don't know if we've been successful in doing that, at least not before this newest record. In the beginning our music was horrible.

Tommi: At the time we didn't really know what we wanted, or how to achieve it...

Allu: We didn't really think of it too much in the beginning. We didn't have any plans how or what we are going to play, because we couldn't really play. We just started playing. Now it's a little bit different and our attitude towards our own music has changed quite a lot.

Saku: We never sat down and thought that this is what we are going to play. Never had plans like that, ever.

Allu: We've realized some facts along the way. We can and we should play tight together and try to make the music work the best we can. We can even try to play the best we can as a band all the time.

MRR: Oh yes, like I remember seeing bands like Wolfpack live for the first time and thinking, "Yes, why aren't more bands playing together, tight as hell, like these guys are? So anyway, you've been playing together almost ten years now. How has that affected you? Do you feel you need to outdo yourselves all the time and play better and write better songs?

Allu: We always think that our songs could be better. But if you really look at the new record and new songs, it's not really that hard. I mean the songs are still quite simple. We just try to write songs with quality-we try. We leave out the brainless goofing and concentrate on the actual playing.

Saku: We've also started to concentrate on our sound, how we sound together and how guitars sound.

Allu: It hasn't been possible before. We've had such bad equipment, or no equipment at all. Can't really concentrate on sound if you don't even have an amp.

Saku: We try to make it a little bit more than just feedback and noise.

UNKIND.

Allu: We've been playing together for so many years that we already know the style of each member. We know that this guy is going to play this riff this way, etc... That makes it easier of course, we know how songs will work in advance. That also makes it easier to write new songs by yourself. You know how it will sound, since you know the style of everybody involved.

MRR: How much has the Finnish punk scene changed since you started playing as a band?

Tommi: For sure it's not worse than before!

Saku: There were some years that nothing was happening. There were no good bands, no new bands at all. But now it's better for sure. There is more happening in many different cities, more activity.

Allu: I think everything is better than the scene in Finland around 1988-1990. That period was straight from hell, a really bad time here.

MRR: Oh yes, I agree. Though there were still some brilliant bands like Treblinka for instance.

Allu: At that time you just bought all the punk records that came out, it didn't matter how bad they were.

MRR: That's true, you bought it all, since there were not many records coming out at the time.

Allu: While right now there are so many bands and so many records coming out that it's totally impossible to try to follow it all. I mean there are so many records and bands worldwide. It's still easy to follow the Finnish scene of course.

MRR: So do you think there are some brilliant new Finnish bands right now?

Tommi: Oh yes, there are some really good bands for sure!

Allu: Dead in the Water is really good. Armageddon Clock is brilliant too.

Saku: I just have to mention Abduktio, since I'm playing cello on their new record...

MRR: So have the gigs changed a lot from the days you started to do gigs?

Allu: At least the audience has changed; there are lots of new young people involved right now.

Saku: There are different kinds of people at gigs. I guess the first gigs for us were such basic crust gigs that only the hard line "kilju" punks were there. [*To non-Finnish punks: Kilju is a Finnish homebrew made of water, sugar and yeast. It looks like glue and it tastes like glue. It's horrible, cheap and gets you drunk. I guess all the Finnish punks have made kilju at some point in their past. And some are still making it.*]

Tommi: I would also say that there are more and more different kinds of people at our gigs.

Allu: And still you can see all the same faces at every gig. Maybe it's all the same bands at every gig too, hah..

Tommi: I also think that bands are more serious now than before. I mean bands are not that drunk on stage anymore and they even try to concentrate on playing a little bit, not just drinking.

Saku: Venues have also changed quite a bit. Now there's more happening in different cities, more real places to play too.

Tommi: Oh yeah, places like Vuoritalo in Helsinki

Allu: We didn't have many places to play before, Rauhanasema in Helsinki and 8-Sali in Lahti.

MRR: You've been touring Europe, so how many times have you toured?

Saku: We don't count the Swedish shows, since it's not really touring if you only go to Sweden.

Allu: We've had three real tours, but I couldn't be on the first tour. I was home. The second tour was basically only in Germany and the third tour was in the autumn of 2003, where you were too...

Saku: That was in Germany, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, France and Sweden.

MRR: What do you think are the differences between the shows in Finland and elsewhere?

Saku: I think that all the shows we've seen abroad have been very well organized, they really put an extra effort in organizing and trying to make it good! They really make fabulous food for the band, get beer, and of course you'll have a place to stay for the night... except in Belgium. That place was some stupid hall that didn't even have real walls.

MRR: That was in Liege, right?

Saku: Yes, after the Ladyfest gig.

Tommi: But the gig itself was really fucking cool!

Allu: Outside of Finland it seems that even if no one knows the band, people still come to see it. Sometimes it's hard to get an audience in Finland if no one knows the band.

Saku: Of course there are people in the bigger cities here too...

Allu: Yes, of course, but I was trying to say that sometimes even I think, "What the hell is that band? I've no idea," and then I just stay home. That's sad, but it happens sometimes.

MRR: I have a feeling that many people are not interested in unknown bands at all, they just want to see the "cool" bands and bands everybody else likes.

Allu: And that's really sad. I think it's really fucking super stupid that there are certain bands that you just have to like, I don't want to say any names, even though I'd like to...

MRR: How many gigs have you played so far?

Tommi: Must be over a hundred.

Allu: If I try to count the gigs here pretty fast, I'd say 150.

Tommi: Maybe 150 if you count this recent English tour in April.

MRR: What have been the best gigs for you so far?

Allu: I think that Ladyfest in Liege, Belgium was one of the best for sure. The first time we played the Zoro squat in Leipzig, Germany, that was really good too.

MRR: I think that the one at Zoro festivals was good too.

Allu: Oh yes, of course, but there were too many people. But yes, it was really fun to be playing there for sure! But you just couldn't move, couldn't go in or out, there were too many people. I think the worst show ever has been in Tornio.

Saku: No, in Kärsämäki!!

Allu: Well, at least we had fun there... There was just lots of chaos in Tornio. There were some misunderstandings, they couldn't even tell us who was organizing the show and in the end the organizer was not in town. Lots of unnecessary chaos involved with that gig. But on the other hand Black Christ was playing there too! In Kärsämäki the gig itself was really bad, but we had really good time there.

Tommi: Saku couldn't come to that gig at all, so we called Piipponen (who is guitar player in Pax Americana) and took him to play drums for us in that gig.

Saku: He had a few hours to think of it and practice, but he did come with us.

Tommi: At the stage we just gave a signal to Piipponen: Start playing NOW! He just banged the drums like a maniac and at the end of each song we had all stopped playing already and tried to wave to Piipponen: Stop, stop playing!!

Allu: That was lots of fun for sure... at least it sounds funny now. Miila was in the band at the time too and she was just telling jokes at the stage all the time. She wouldn't leave the stage at all.

Tommi: All this happened years and years ago, just when we started really.

Saku: That was also in the middle of winter and there was no heating in the van, of course...

Allu: It was so fucking cold!! Freezing as hell! It made me miss my mom or anybody really. I bet you would have loved to be there, but you were not!

MRR: Oh yes, I still don't know anything about Kärsämäki. The whole scene in that village is unknown to me.

Saku: By the way that gig in Jönköping, Sweden was quite shit too. The gig that we played at 3 pm.

Allu: That was shit, but on the other hand we got in for free to these festivals where Looptroop (Swedish hip hop) played later that night.

MRR: Oh yes, we had fun in Sweden, but the gig surely was strange.

Allu: We were playing while they were cooking at the same time. They has this "people's kitchen" going on there and we played in the corner.

Tommi: We stayed like a week in Sweden at that time and played one show.

Saku: We were supposed to have three shows originally, right?

Tommi: Yes, but the other two were cancelled in the last minute. Of course.

Saku: I wonder why they don't have too many gigs in Sweden.

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Allu: But they have some brilliant bands there. It's hard for me to understand how come they don't have many gigs, since they have and have had so many good bands. Like for instance my mother-in-law and her family lives in Uppsala, Sweden. When you go visit them, nothing is happening, the city seems to be dead. Then you come back home and find out that there was actually two gigs, or were suppose to be, at the same time. But no one knows and no one advertises the gigs. I hope it's getting better.

MRR: You have cello and mandolin in your new record. How did that song happen?

Saku: Marko had a feeling and a vision about that song. He got the inspiration when he read about this mass murder that Nazis did during the Second World War. Nazis killed over 30,000 Jews in Babi Jar, Ukraine in just couple of days. The horrible feelings Marko got from that gave the inspiration to write that song, and that's how it happened.

Allu: We actually had talked about having a cello on one song for quite some time, but never really had a song to do it with. By the way, it seems to be some kind of a trend to have a cello or a violin in a band. That's not the case for us, we are not planning to have a cello or violin full time, we just wanted to take advantage of Saku's musicianship.

Saku: I've been playing cello since I was seven years old.

Allu: He's our multi-instrumentalist. He can play anything—guitar, bass, drums, cello, keyboards and piano, mouth-organ..

Saku: I have some flutes home now, but I haven't really got acquainted with those yet.

Allu: Anything goes... what a weird musical family.

Saku: I just had to start playing drums, since at the time no one was playing drums. And a band is supposed to have a drummer too. Actually right now I've just started a band where I don't have to play drums for the first time.

Allu: I can't play any instrument, but I still play guitar. Well, I can play bass, if required, but I'm definitely not musical or talented or anything like that. Tommi is an old bass artist (he used to play bass in Olotila for many years), so it seems the band is full of bass players, fucking hell. Janne plays bass too...

Saku: Every one of us is playing bass in some other band, or at least have been playing before.

MRR: So the whole band is just a big bassist joke then! So, how would you define your own music?

Allu: This is hard. I have never seen a good answer to this question, not with any band ever. It's really hard... Maybe it's rocking D-beat... crust 'n' roll... Who knows?

MRR: Have you ever had any real crazy situations in studio?

Allu: I think the craziest may have been the time when we were recording the split 7" with Police Bastard. I actually played bass on that recording. I was totally wasted in the studio and played like shit. I just played the riff, but it was played on the wrong fret, so I played wrong notes all the time. But somehow it sounds quite good. I played the riff right all the time, but from a wrong place. Taurus (the vocalist of Força Macabra) told us that it was really good. He said that it's great that we dared to do that thrash metal thing in that song. We didn't have a clue what we had done at the time. We were wondering what the hell Taurus is talking about. We didn't notice anything before we had actual records in our hands.

Tommi: It took like two hours to record the whole thing.

Allu: Taurus thought that we actually were bright enough to do that thrash metal thing ourselves, but we were not. I just played it wrong by accident. I was drunk. On the other hand I think there's been something crazy happening in the studio every time, except the last couple of times.

MRR: Do you have crazy stories from your tours?

Saku: The first time in England was totally chaos in my opinion.

Tommi: Oh yes, Janne fell in that huge hole the first day.

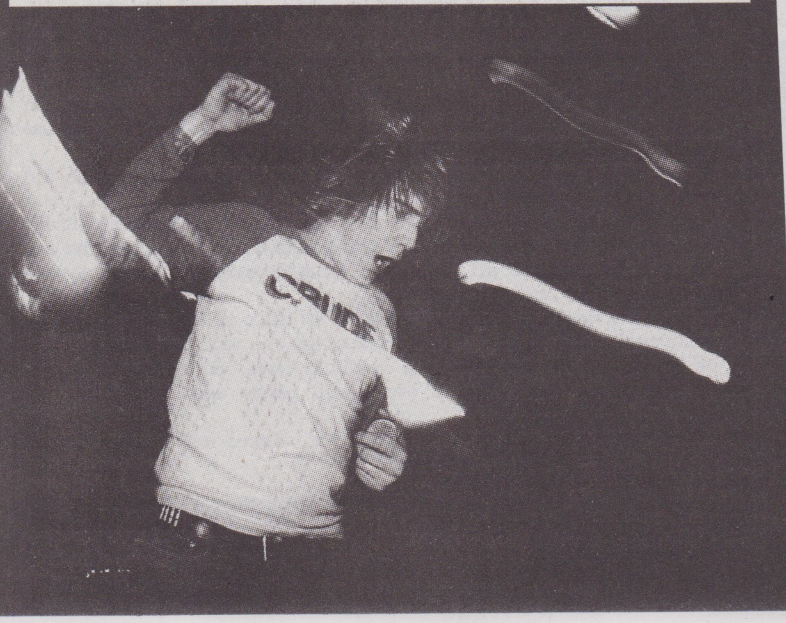
Saku: We flew to England with Finnair and got free alcohol on the plane. Miila was not in the band anymore, but she was living in London, still is... Some repairs at the yard were done at the time and there was this huge hole with gravel in the bottom. Janne and Perttu (ex-bass player, plays now drums in Riistetyt) started to jump into the hole around 3 a.m. They were very drunk at the time. Janne did a crazy jump and hit his face quite badly. The corner of his eye was ripped open pretty bad.

Tommi: His eyelid was ripped in half or something. We drove him to hospital drunk and after lots of chaos at the hospital, they finally got it done.

Allu: They wanted to keep Janne at the hospital the whole night, but we just left as soon as possible, there was more drinking to be done. We hadn't even played a single show in England yet. So basically nothing ever happens to us on tour, as you know. Some minor chaos every now and then. No one ever steals our van or all of the equipment or anything like that. But, hey! Our van burned on the road last autumn. We were playing few shows with this Spanish band called Ekkaia, but of course our van started to burn on the highway. It burned like hellfire. At least it didn't blow up.

Tommi: It was a very small van, Suzuki, looks like an egg.

Allu: It still may be burning there...



MDC

MRR: MDC has never given up, but now we can say the band is really back with *Magnus Dominus Corpus*, the first album in eleven years. Why has there been such a long lapse of time? Meanwhile, did MDC ever stop touring?

Dave: Well actually, we did stop touring many times in the 90s. Al had legal problems and there was an eight or nine year pause between trips going to Europe. We did mini-tours. I did the Submissives with Tom Pig of Poison Idea. Then I went through a period of quitting drugs after that. An album takes a cohesive unit putting forth good ideas, and it wasn't flowing right the past ten years, at least not for an album's worth of music.

MRR: It's a real comeback because three original members have now rejoined the band. How was this possible?

Dave: Well actually, the fourth member came back as well. So it's Mike Donaldson, Ron Posner, Alschvitz, and myself Dave Dictor.

Ron and I found each other after years, actually through the internet. Then we toured Europe, played the Holidays In The Sun Festival in the UK, hung out with Texas Terry, played Mondo Bizarre in Rennes, with Raf Punk in Limoges, in Dijon at the squat, with the Mass Murderers at the Wagon in Brittany…Anyway, it is very satisfying that a friendship and a love for the band still exists in us all. I feel it is a special magic that is getting a second life.

MRR: In its history, a lot of musicians have played for MDC. Do you think they all brought something to the identity of the band, or that they just permitted to the band to survive?

Dave: The various line-ups (mostly) were very special. The line-up with Chris Wilder of Sticky, and Erica Liss, the only female of MDC, was really special in 1992. We could not only hang together, but we could jerk off together. That's close.

Unfortunately many times people said they wanted to be in MDC for a long time, and one tour, one record, and one year later they would leave. Bands are like marriages: sometimes it can be very tough, and if there is not a lot of money then it's even tougher.

MRR: The new record is out on Sudden Death Records, Joey Shithead's label. It's pretty funny to see "old timers" helping each other mutually. Why did you choose to work with him? Was no one else interested in MDC?

Dave: Well Joey Shithead and MDC have had a long association. Joey is truly one of the real down to earth people in this business. Really. Fucking Really. We shopped it and showed it around a bit; Joey was the warmest and most inspired to do it.

MRR: The first MDC records were released by your own label R Radical. So why didn't you put out *Magnus Dominus Corpus* yourself?

Dave: Well, R Radical got ripped-off in the mid 80s by a cretin named Tabb Rexx (some mid level guy who we did thousands of dollars worth of business with on only a hand shake). I never got over it. We were responsible for paying DRI and Reagan Youth money, so that took us a lot of time to pay off. I lost the desire be in the record biz on that level. I wanted to make music.

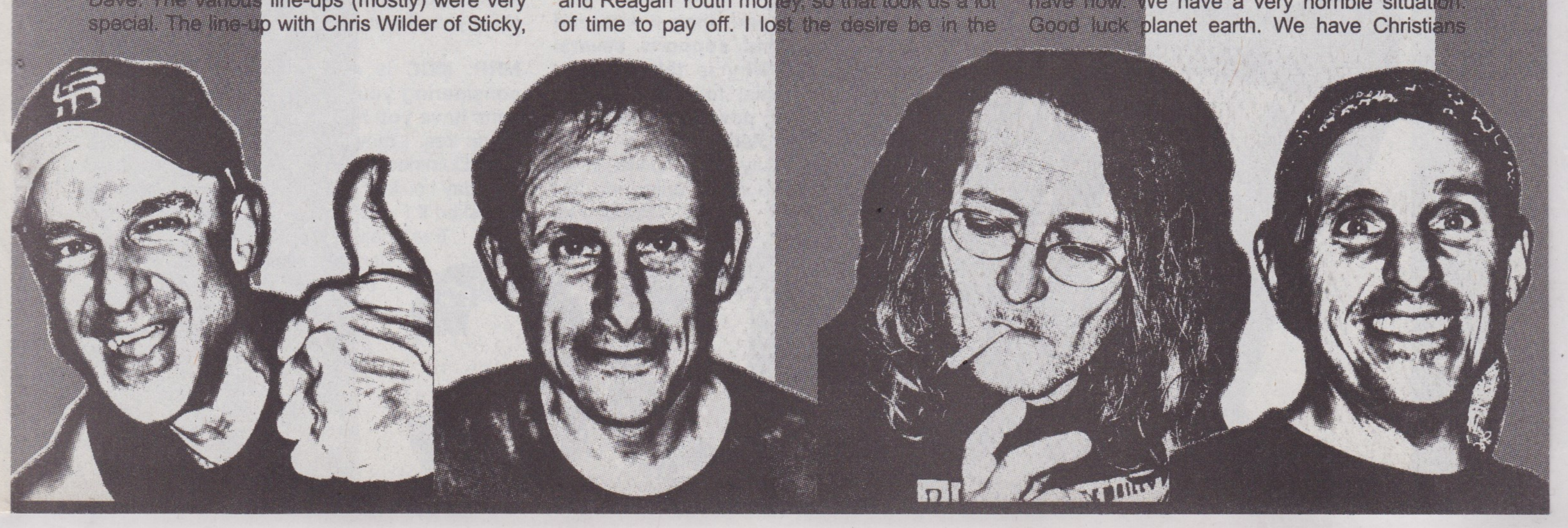
MRR: On R Radical you have also put out records from DRI, the Dicks, BGK, Reagan Youth, and the Offenders. Do you remember how difficult it was to put out punk records at this time? Why and when did the label stop?

Dave: It stopped about 1985 with the big rip-off. We released things under R Radical, but really through Boner Records and other people in Europe (like We Bite Records). Many people have been ripped-off in the music business, from Little Richard to little ol' MDC. The old distro chain was as treacherous — many people did not get paid for albums shipped.

> "We have a very horrible situation. Good luck planet earth. We have Christians saying that the earth is thousands of years old and that the dinosaurs went extinct through humans hunting them. It's called faith-based science as opposed to reality-based science. These people want to drive us to the Armageddon to prove that the Bible is right and that it predicted the end of the world — all with large tax cuts for the rich."

MRR: Can you talk about the content of the new album? I imagine that the recent events (the Bush re-election, war in Iraq, ascension of the religious mentality, etc.) have stimulated you in writing this record.

Dave: Well, it totally inspired so much. Even though there were things to politically rant about in the 90s, I still kinda liked Bill Clinton, a sax player, so much more liberal than what we have now. We have a very horrible situation. Good luck planet earth. We have Christians



MDC

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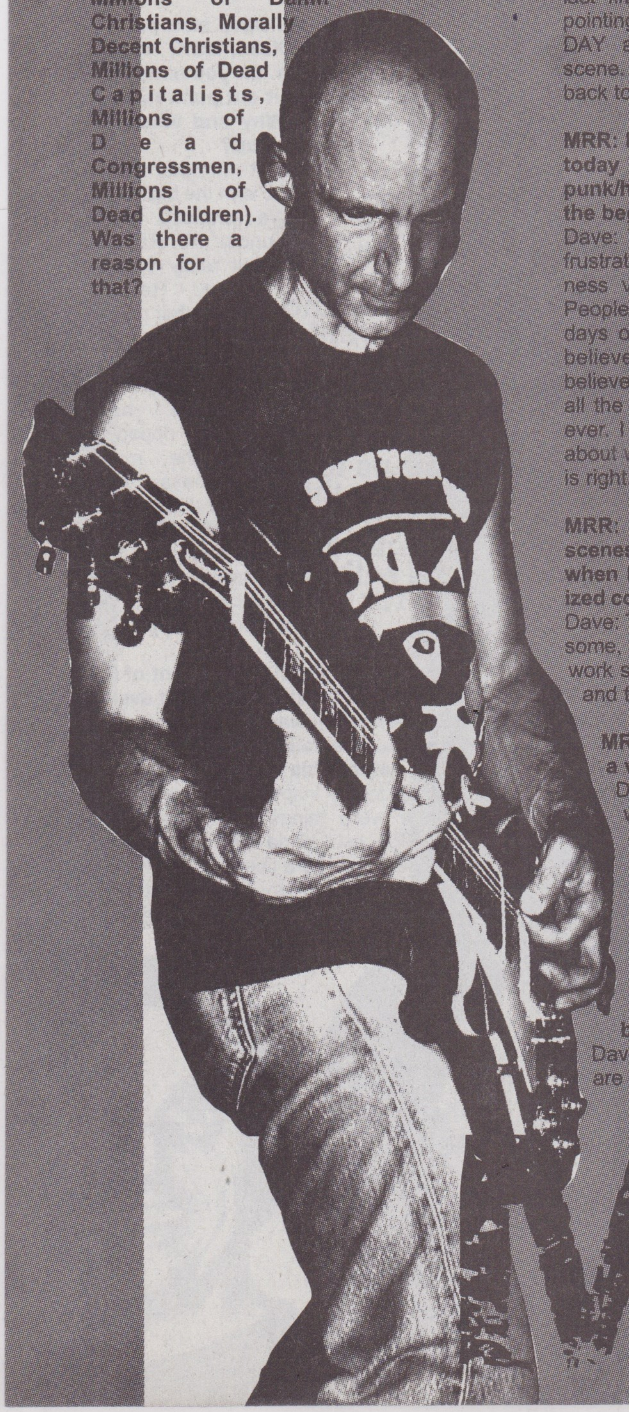
MRR: What does "Magnus Dominus Corpus" mean?
Dave: It means corpses of the ultimate dominator. It was a Latin term used by the Crusaders to describe the complete hatred between Christian and Islam warriors during the Middle Ages fighting each other in the Middle East. Human history is small wars, little wars, big wars, medium wars, religious wars, cultural wars, economic wars — never no war on this planet.

MRR: In the 90s, you abandoned titles with the initials MDC (Millions of Dead Cops, Millions of Damn Christians, Morally Decent Christians, Millions of Dead Capitalists, Millions of Dead Congressmen, Millions of Dead Children). Was there a reason for that?



Dave: We just went with what we felt. Using "Hey Cop If I Had A Face Like Yours (I'd Shave My Ass and Walk Backwards)" as anti-cop humor, and "Shades Of Brown" as a statement on race and America. We felt those were the statements we wanted to use. This last album was almost Millions Of Dead Contractors.

> "People are more jaded today than in the heady days of the late 70s and early 80s when we believed in Anarchy in the UK — really believed. That said, we can't go backwards and all the problems of the planet are worse than ever. I hope we all get (and stay) passionate about working for change and fighting for what is right."

MRR: MDC plays regularly outside the USA. Do you think punk/hardcore is perceived differently in Europe, in Japan, or in South America?
Dave: In South America punk is truly a movement and a statement that isn't a teenage phase. It was very refreshing to be there three years ago in Brazil. So much American punk was based on taking the piss out of anything political in the last fifteen years. It was disappointing in the 90s watching GREEN DAY and NOFX dominate the punk scene. Though it is good to see them come back to politics as of late.

MRR: In the same way, do you think people today are looking for the same thing from punk/hardcore than you were looking for at the beginning of the 80s?
Dave: Yeah, I think people want to have their frustrated feelings of alienation and of helplessness validated. That is basically the same. People are more jaded today than in the heady days of the late 70s and early 80s when we believed in Anarchy in the UK — really believed. That said, we can't go backwards and all the problems of the planet are worse than ever. I hope we all get (and stay) passionate about working for change and fighting for what is right.

MRR: The punk rock and the hardcore scenes are now much more organized than when MDC started. Do you think an organized counterculture is still a counterculture?
Dave: That is a tough one. Punk is big profit for some, but there are really so many people who work so hard for so little. Bless the little labels and the DIY squats. Really, I love them.

MRR: Do you think punk/hardcore is still a vector of contestation?
Dave: Man, two big words. I think I know what you mean. I believe punk will be controversial and part of culture forever. It is still a "vector of contestation."

MRR: MDC is more than words and music. The band supports several organizations. Why is this engagement so essential for you? Do we overestimate the power/influence of a band on their audience?
Dave: That is the beauty of the individual; we are all the center of our own universes. Yet Bono can only influence George Bush so much. I am always humbled when people tell me we had a large influence on them becoming vegetarians or vegans, yet I continually expect an asteroid to slam into this planet — all our hot air will mean nothing. Rebel and enjoy your moment. Life goes by fairly quickly, especially when you slide from your thirties into your forties.

MRR: In the 80s, punk rock and hardcore were very close. Now it seems [that to some people] they have become two different entities, opposite and contradictory (anarcho-punk vs. straight edge; NYHC attitude vs. DIY bands).
Dave: Very true. I really enjoy it when the walls break down. People really like to be with their own tribe of people that think alike. It does turn into a ghetto though — and then there's the boredom that comes with that.

MRR: A few years ago, MDC released EPs on Honest Don's and Slap-A-Ham, two very different labels musically. Was this in order to reach more people?
Dave: They were interested in doing our records. It was fun to work with different people. I like to work with different labels to reach different types of people. I am very happy with both of those associations.

MRR: Is it boring to be presented as a punk/hardcore legend every time people talk about you or about your band? Is it a similar dynamic to playing and only being asked to play old songs?
Dave: It is an honor to be considered one of the elders and early leaders of punk/hardcore. I was and still am involved, so it's accurate. About the songs, you want people to like all your songs and to give the new ones a chance, but I understand. I have my favorite Johnny Cash songs; I would be tempted to yell for "Ring Of Fire" at a Johnny Cash concert. I love that song a lot — and he wrote it in the mid 60s. Though I also loved the new songs on his *American Box Set* with Rick Rubin, especially "Pocahantas" written by Neil Young. Johnny's passing last year was a great passing — my mom, Ray Charles, and Johnny Cash — plus George Bush's reelection, and the death of so many innocents in Iraq and the Sudan. What a shitty year it was.

MRR: MDC is originally from Texas, and considering your name, what sort of problems have you had to confront?
Dave: Yes, I moved to Austin in 1976. I delivered Dominos Pizza when I first got to town. One day I picked up Gary Floyd hitchhiking and he asked if I was going to see the Sex Pistols. Eventually, I would hang with Gary on campus where he had a snack cart. One day, a beautiful sorority girl, a real bona fide future Stepford wife, saw Gary and I. She, in proper snooty regal manner, pouted and shrugged,

noticeably very bothered to have to see people like us on the way to class. Well she curled her nose and rolled her eyes as she walked past us and just as she was one step past us Gary bellowed to her "girls like you make me queer." She froze and scurried away. It was a very special moment because it occurred to me that being polite to the wrong people was not the way to go through this life.

> "One day, a beautiful sorority girl, a real bona fide future Stepford wife, saw Gary and I. Well she curled her nose and rolled her eyes as she walked past us and just as she was one step past us Gary bellowed to her "girls like you make me queer." It was a very special moment because it occurred to me that being polite to the wrong people was not the way to go through this life. It was a very special moment because it occurred to me that being polite to the wrong people was not the way to go through this life."

I soon found Raul's and that was really something very special. I got to see the Huns, the Next, and the Boy Problems. For a long while, the Dicks were a poster band. Living in the style of Gary's imagination, doing his poster art. I started the Stains the same way. No band members. No amps. It was a poster band that would eventually grow into a real band.

We probably had the best scene in the country in 1980 and 1981. The Big Boys and the Dicks were mind-blowing and down to earth people. Patti Smith got up and played with the Skunks, Fear, DOA, and Black Flag toured through. My first pogo was with a bunch of gals I hung out with at the Hollywood (pre-Clubfoot) to the Runaways.

Sometimes we were bothered by Ku Klux Klan idiots who marched in Austin back in 1981, but most of the time it was plain ol' redneck frat-boy jerks. It was perfect timing to live in Texas through John Wayne's death in 1979 and to get to write "John Wayne Was a Nazi" the weekend he died (after seeing those straight college kids crying over his death). We are on our way back down to do a tour of Texas with the four original members. It will be a great homecoming of sorts.

MRR: Let's talk about Boxcar Dave, your solo project. What does it sound like? Why another band?

Dave: Well, Boxcar Dave was just me solo, but it's turned into MDC Unplugged with Ron Posner backing me up, which is hybrid-ing into something else. I hope to have a release by the end of the year. The songs are written — the right musicians need to be found. I aim for the autumn.

MRR: MDC will be on a compilation with bands like Leftover Crack and Anti-Flag. These bands are as virulent as MDC was back in the day. [editor's note: Anti-Flag recently un-virulently signed to a major label. Fuck them.] Do you see a difference between them and you at the same age?

Dave: I love Leftover Crack; they are my favorite of the new crop. They piss off everybody. They did a papier-mâché reenactment of the planes going into the world trade center weeks after the 9-11 event, in only a few blocks distance from the World Trade Center Sight. I though it was perfectly snide and totally irreverent.

MRR: I suppose you have read the book *American Hardcore*. Do you agree about what he wrote about the scene and especially about MDC?

Dave: I looked it over. It identifies me as a cross dressing Che. I first I felt it was glib, but over time I feel honored by that comment. It tried to cover a lot of territory. All in all it was cool. That period still needs to be documented more fully.

MRR: A lot of people say that the American hardcore scene wouldn't have become so big and so bright without Ronald Reagan. Do you think the same thing can happen now with George W. Bush?

Dave: I don't know. The other side of a large angry army of punks fighting the good fight is that people feel helpless, or that people just turn inwards. The kids are restless yet they are all truly brought up by television with product placement. My son is twenty and he is an escapist. He is a gamer, plays Dungeons and Dragons, did years of Magic the Gathering, and Pokemon. He is liberal but not passionate. He is a good kid but not passionate about politics. It's weird how that happens. Generational differences and all that. Rock Against Bush was like the insiders big bands meeting on CD and it was a sampler with more purpose, but I think it didn't really risk much. I mean where were Leftover Crack, the Stockyard Stoics, Molotov Cocktail, and the Restarts? These bands live their politics, not just on a big comp with the most famous bands. I always say shit like this, but I was more impressed by Bruce Springsteen speaking up against Bush and really taking risks to do what he did, coming out for Kerry and against the war.

MRR: What do you think of Rock Against Bush? It was the first time that the whole punk rock movement was mobilized against a presidential candidate, even though it didn't work, was it was a good idea?

Dave: Yeah it was a good idea. I look at the list and I feel like most of those bands are quite elitist and I am not sure I'd want to hang out with them and their egos for more than twenty minutes. I know I am supposed to hob knob with them all to get the "big shows," but fuck it.

MRR: Do you see your job as an educator of developmentally disabled students as a continuity of MDC?

Dave: Yeah, I feel punk and special education are not that very far apart. I am looking to get involved with teenagers at risk and am taking some university courses to prepare. There are many punks at these schools. I hope to help them get on, be healthy, and not lead themselves into self-destructive behaviors. I am personally clean from drugs and alcohol six years now; I wish I could say it was twenty-six years. What a waste of time for me to get wasted over and over again for all those years not even remembering much of the fun.

MRR: You have collaborated with MRR since the early years. Did you ever think of publishing your stuff as a book or a fanzine?

Dave: I write and have collected my writings. I have written short stories. I am working on it. I also want to do a book on the Austin, Texas scene and early 80s San Francisco scenes, both are underreported topics.

MRR: Any closing comments?

Dave: Be true, be blue, and be good to yourself. See you soon, I hope.

MDC

TEENAGE HARLETS

I was gonna write a big intro, to cover all the shit the band didn't bother talking about, but it seems dumb to write a huge thing for a band whose set is fourteen fun, catchy, dumb songs in fifteen minutes. Teenage Harlets is one of the best live bands in Bay Area, probably because they've played out about once a week for six years running, and have got a great front man to go with their high-energy shows. Their sound is like a surf/garage band doing the Queers' Suck This LP, *perfect for drinking and/or dancing. By the time you read this, the band will be on tour across the US with Groovie Ghoulies and Teenage Bottlerocket, so keep an eye out. We did the interview in the time it took to drink one cold Tecate, May 5th, '05, in the VIP lounge bathroom, upstairs at the club Studio Z, after they had saved an otherwise dismal show. The band is (and has been since day one): Adam—drums, Chris—guitar, Johnny—vocals. Chris [#2] was filling in on bass but was pretty quiet during the interview. Intro, photos, and questions by Jeff Mason. We join the discussion already in progress.*

A: ...takin' shits on the road.

MRR: Takin' shits on the road?

J: Different places you can shit.

A: Like how the different toilets are, how to deal with different toilets, how to get people to let you use their toilet...

MRR: What can you tell us about what you learned on the road? This is a critical issue for all humans.

J: Don't pee on someone's stereo.

A: Homeless kids always know the good places to take shits.

J: Libraries.

A: It's well worth a buck to some kid on a street corner...

MRR: Sure, everybody wins.

C: [launches into an extended metaphor about how, in the old days, you'd pay the shoeshine guy to learn stuff if you were new in town.]

A: It's secret local knowledge. When you show up and you're an outsider, you not gonna have that knowledge. You know when you get to a bar early, the bathroom's still clean. You can do your business. Some bars, the doors don't lock, and it doesn't matter if you get there early, 'cause the bartender will be like, "oh, just have your buddy watch the door."

MRR: The Eagle's like that.

C: It's like landing a fighter pilot, because it is an urgent.... [people make fun of Chris for misspeaking and everyone is talking at once.]

J: OK, interview. You got questions for us?

MRR: I made a list, sure. First, I wanted to start with the boring band history. The band started in 1999 in Mountain View, is that how it went?

J: Sure. Perfect.

C: No, actually it was Alviso. For the record, Alviso is 42 feet below sea level.

MRR: What was the first punk show you went to?

J: Ever?

MRR: Yeah. When you were getting into it, what were you getting into?

J: I think I saw the Misfits, back in '79.

MRR: Oh, really?

J: No.

A; Blink 182...

J: Oh, Blink 182, *awesome* time...

A: ...at the Mountain View, what's that place called...

J: Auditiorium.

C: I saw Anti-Flag on the Warped Tour last year.

MRR: Fuck, I bet.

J: Which music is punk rock, which one's that?

MRR: Punk rock? Did you see [shitty band that just got done playing]? Like that.

J: [Shitty band that just got done playing], that's my first show.

MRR: You booked your most recent tour?

J: Yes sir, we booked our own tour.

MRR: How did it go?

J: Great. We got drunk every night for thirty-two days in a row.

MRR: You didn't have any problem getting to the next gig, dragging your ass outta bed the next morning or nothing like that?

J: One person would stay sober enough to drive. Enough...

MRR: I understand. You can have a couple...

J: Just a couple beers for that guy.

MRR: You did the fucking Warped Tour before that, last summer?

All: Yeah.

A: It's not as bad as it sounds.

MRR: You had a tour booked, right? Didn't you have a bunch of gigs out to Colorado already booked yourself?

A: Yeah, we did.

MRR: And you cancelled that shit to do the fucking Warped Tour. What's the incentive, what's the upside?

J: Because it was with the Phenomenauts.

A: And it's a whole different set of people. Kids who normally would not see real rock bands.

C: The saving grace of the whole thing was being able to go on tour with bands that, me personally, had no problem hearing every single day of my life. That still has not been lost on me — hearing those bands that we played with, like the Groovie Ghoulies and the Phenomenauts, all the time. As far as being on the Warped Tour, it was a rough schedule...

A: What people don't know about that tour, [is that] it's insane.

MRR: You don't get paid, right?

A: You don't get paid...

J: ...you don't eat, you don't sleep.

A: The drives are six to eight hours every night. 'Cause they don't go town-to-town, they hit the big cities on the weekends and go back and forth to the small towns in between. So you're not necessarily going sequentially. You gotta be at the venue by seven or eight in the morning to set up.

J: You leave by eleven or midnight.

A: You can't break down until they clear out the parking lot. So you're out of there at eleven, you gotta be at the next venue at eight...

MRR: And you don't get paid!

A: You don't get paid.

J: You're not advertised, 'cause you're not a real band

C: The thought of money never crosses your mind.

MRR: Well, you gotta put gas in your van.

C: That's true...

A: We put gas in the van.

MRR: Just sellin' shit?
A: Selling your shit.
J: Hustling your shit.
C: As far as making money... It's not a thought of putting gas in the van, it's a thought of getting to the next show, period. As far as little details, you get to the next show, and then you play that show. And then, once you're at that show, then you try to get to the next show. That's kind of the way it works.
MRR: One day at a time.
C: As far as, "How are we gonna pay for gas?" That's superfluous.
MRR: [laughs]
A: Actually, we had a big problem on Warped Tour. On day one, our transmission stopped transmitting.
J: Twenty-five hundred dollars later...
A: Yeah, but the kids in Reno, there's such a cool punk scene there...
J: *Awesome*, awesome kids.
A: ...everyone there is so cool. This girl Lauren, who we really didn't know very well, loaned us her van—along with herself for a couple days—until our van got fixed, so we could continue with the tour.
J: Totally super nice.
A: We were losin' money like mad, but still it has a way of working out.
MRR: On this tour you just went on, did kids who saw you at Warped Tour go to your shows?
A: Only a couple...
J: ...because most of the shows were 21+.
A: The Chicago shows, Cleveland, the Indiana shows, those were all Warped Tour spin-off shows. We were booked as "as seen on Warped Tour."
MRR: "Don't you remember, from the fuckin' awesome Warped Tour..." What kind of work y'all do? What do you do to make money?
A: We're man whores.
MRR: [not hearing the whole thing] You're a man whore? Chris, what about you?
C: I'm a professional musician.
MRR: Johnny, you got a job?
J: Bartender.
MRR: I was wonderin' how you paid your rent while you were gone on tour?
J: We don't.
A: Well, we saved our money, and we paid the rent, but I forgot about the electricity bill.
MRR: Really? 'Cause it seemed to me, I suspected, that you dress nicer for shows than you do for your job.
J: I dress real nice for my job.
MRR: Nicer than you did tonight?
C: Well, that's the problem. You've got to dress a certain way for rock 'n' roll. You want to present a certain image. And it's a very difficult thing when you wanna do something else. If you wanna work a day job, you still wanna dress the same way, those are the clothes that you wear. I don't have money to buy trendy clothes and stuff like that. So I show up at my job, dressing the way I do, and sometimes people make me feel uncomfortable.
MRR: You're in-between bass players, right? 'Cause I heard Theo got arrested in Kentucky, and he's still there, and that's why he doesn't play with you anymore.
J: That's true. But Chris [#2] is filling in for now.
MRR: What about when you're playing a warehouse, and drunk girls hang all over you? I've seen that a few times. What have been your experiences going home with drunk girls you met at warehouse shows?
J: The problem is, we're all gay...
MRR: So it's part of your rocknroll image?
A: No, but being from San Francisco, when we're out of town, people are like, "hey, you're from San Francisco. So, are you guys gay?"
MRR: Do people actually say that to you?
All: Yeah.
J: So we make out with them to prove we're not.
C: You know, the thing that's a problem about that, is when you actually try to talk to a person man-to-man, you talk about this and that, like "I went fishing the other weekend and I caught a fuckin' 38 pound striped bass!" And then they say, "where are you from?" "I'm from San Francisco." They're all, "oh,

"As far as making money... It's not a thought of putting gas in the van, it's a thought of getting to the next show, period. As far as little details, you get to the next show, and then you play that show. And then, once you're at that show, then you try to get to the next show. That's kind of the way it works."

you're from... oh..." The vibe of the whole conversation changes.

J: We're from San Fransisco, but we're not 'from San Fransisco.'

MRR: What are your shout-outs and final thoughts?

J: Eddie Haskels, Phenomenauts, Groovie Ghoulies, Lucky Stiffs...

C: Left Alone!

J: Left Alone, Rubber City Rebels...

MRR: What bands can drink as much Pabst Blue Ribbon, or other shitty beer, as the Teenage Harlets?

J: PBR Street Gang.

A: Nobody.

J: Nobody, that's right. Grannies, East Bay Chasers, Rocknroll Adventure Kids...

A: Maybe them.

J: ...Fracture...

MRR: All right, thanks so much.

J: That's it?

MRR: That's all I got. Unless you got something else you wanna be asked. What do they ask you in all your other interviews?

J: "What are you doing later tonight?"

MRR: "What you got in the bag? Can I see that?"

J: "How big is it?"

I thought of some other questions to kind of stretch this thing out, and a few days later I met up with Chris and Johnny at their spacious flat in San Francisco's Lower Haight. Adam couldn't make it because a sink in his house had overflowed and water leaked all over his records, so he was busy cleaning/salvaging them. We did this second part over cheap beers in the bathroom on a four-track; Johnny had to whack it nine or twelve times to get it going.

MRR: What the fuck was I gonna say...

J: I don't know, don't you have a list of questions you wanna ask us?

MRR: No, I didn't write any down, 'cause last time I did, and it proved to be a waste. Oh yeah—you mostly played bar shows on tour, but around here you'll play any fuckin' thing. How do you like bar shows compared to a party, a warehouse, or an all ages show?

J: We basically play whatever we can get. Usually bars are the easiest shows to get, plain and simple.

C: They are usually the thing that's available for the band. But, I have to say, warehouse shows are a lot of fun, and parties are a lot of fun, because...

J: It's a party. You don't have to pay for the beer.

C: Exactly. You get the whole party vibe. It happens too, at some bars we play, where people are up on stage dancing.

J: People are there for the party, not the band. People who normally wouldn't come to see you, they're just there, they stumble across you. At a bar, you're like, "what bands are playing? Oh, I don't want to go to that bar." 'Cause there's a bunch of lame bands.

C: You get not necessarily your regular audience, you get a different audience. You get a party audience. You get a drunk audience. That's the great thing about it.

J: [belches loudly]

MRR: Where were the good shows when you toured last time?

J: Reno. Always in Reno.

C: Oklahoma, at the Hi Lo.

J: The Hi Lo is a great place. A gay bar in Oklahoma City, you'd be totally shocked.

MRR: No, I'm sure they got one or two.

C: Well, I know they have one. They throw punk rock shows, everybody there is really nice, great time. The bands that played were great. This band called Twenty Minutes to Vegas...

J: Awesome, awesome.

C: We played with them and they were fuckin' great. Great guys too, we stayed up all night and got trashed with them. They have a really nice house, they have a treehouse in their back yard.

J: That's right, a big treehouse, it's comfortable.

MRR: Did you stay in the treehouse?

C: No, we didn't, because I didn't know they had it until the next morning when I stumbled out there, hungover, and they're talking about having a party with it. The thing is, it's a treehouse, but there's no wall on the front part. I'm like, "You should probably fix that wall if you wanna throw a treehouse party."

MRR: At least waist high.

C: Exactly. Somebody might fall out of it and it's a good thirty-foot drop. But they were awesome, it was a fun place to play. Utah was fun, Salt Lake City, we had a good time there. We were supposed to play a party, and it was at these kids' house. I guess the promoter who was in charge of everything was about seven years old. This little kid comes out, barking out orders to us.

J: He's like, "My dad's inside setting up the PA, and my mom's making cookies..."

C: He's like, "Who are you guys?"

J: It was gonna be a great show until the cops showed up. They said there's just too many kids hanging out. There was no music or nothing, they just said "you kids have to go home."

MRR: Too much freedom of assembly.

J: That's what it was. They said, "If you kids don't leave, you'll get arrested for trespassing." At the kids' own house.

MRR: Was there a show at all in Salt Lake?

C: Yeah, we played a bar that night with a band called Bloodworm.

J: Bloodworm, they were great.

C: They're a fun band. It was great because they were so hospitable at the bar. They gave us food and these pitchers of beer. In Utah, the alcohol-to-beer ratio is way lower, so you can drink these gigantic...

J: Yeah, to make up they give you these 30 oz. beers. So you just drink a bunch of those, and pee a lot all night, but you get drunk.

C: But it was a great thing because I kept thinking, "wow, I can really hold my alcohol. I can drink this great, gigantic beer, and then I can have another beer, and I feel all right, like I can drink another beer, too. And I can still play a show." The beer was less potent than it is out here...

MRR: Three-two, they call it, 3.2% alcohol.

C: ...but my imagination really made up for it, my self-image and who I thought I was.

MRR: That's great. So it really did work for you.

J: It was such a good place that when we

TEENAGE HARLETS

showed up, the owner was hanging out at the bar, and the first thing he did was buy us shots. He said, "Whatever you guys want to eat, it's on me. Whatever you want for drinks, it's all free all night." I don't even know if we got paid. It didn't matter. We got food, free beer all night, shots with the owner, it was fuckin' great.

MRR: So the band's been playing out six years, about once a week. How many times has anyone in the band been punched out or arrested as a result of your shows?

J: I've been punched many times, but never been arrested.

C: I've never been arrested.

J: I can't think of anything juicy like that.

C: I keep thinking we will be. I think, "OK, it's happening tonight," and then everyone's like, "You guys were great!"

MRR: Johnny, you've been punched a few times?

J: Many times.

MRR: In town or out of town?

J: Both. There's always some dick at the shows, thinking "Oh cool, I can punch this guy while he's runnin' around. I'm gonna hit you in the back of the head, or kick you while you're on the ground." It's interesting. Fuckin' meatheads.

MRR: On the records, the graphics are all ladies. The theme of the band is ladies. It's Dead Girl Records, Teenage Harlets, and when you get the record, it's a bunch of girls on the front. But when you see the band, it's all dudes.

J: Who wants to buy a record with a bunch of guys on it? That's not hot.

C: No, it's not hot at all. It's great, when you go to a club, they're like "Teenage Harlets are playing." Then they're like, "you're not a bunch of chicks, you're a bunch of ugly-ass dudes!" It's like, yeah, that's right. We're gonna play some cool music for you, though. It's like a little challenge for us. What can we do to show that people actually like us? And then they come up to us and they say, "wow, that was cool. And I say, "right on. Thanks. I'm glad you liked us. We weren't girls, we're not teenagers, we're not underage..." I haven't thought much about our name lately.

MRR: Or the graphics. Johnny, you do all the design work, right?

J: I do most of the graphics. Friends of ours take the photos and stuff. Photos of our friends and girlfriends, and we play with them from there.

C: They look a lot better than we do.

MRR: So it was a conscious marketing decision.

C: Not marketing, I think a visual decision.

MRR: Oh, aesthetics, you're saying.

J: It's all about the looks.

MRR: If it was four hot dudes in the band, you would've put yourselves on. But since it's not that way, you had to go another direction.

C: Not that I'm not hot, or strapping.

MRR: They're gonna see the pictures, so everyone will know. How do you like living at Waller and Webster? How long have you been here?

J: Three and a half years.

C: I've been here about two and a half years.

MRR: How do you like it?

C: I like it. The thing I like is when I come home from work, there's usually some lady there to welcome you. "You're home, honey..."

J: Always "honey."

C: And it's like, "I'm home." She totally just greeted me, that's so nice.

J: It's awesome, when we got back from the tour, they're like, "Where've you been for the last month?" They *notice*.

C: Normally there's like one or two. When we got back from tour, there were five or six of them when we pulled up. It's like a fucking reunion.

J: Hugs and shit.

C: It's almost heart wrenching, 'Cause I never thought it would've been like that. I thought it would have been way more sinister and evil, like the stories they tell you about people who do drugs, but no.

J: They just don't want us to call the cops, bottom line.

MRR: Sure. I've found the best party in the Lower Haight is outside the liquor store at Steiner, at 1:55 am. There's a huge crowd, and everyone's always in such a good mood. It seems like there must be enough drugs going around...

J: Yeah, there's lot of drugs around here. We actually have a crack house right behind us. It gets busted every now and then. So I'm going with the dogs, and undercover cops are waiting to break down the door.

MRR: But you folks have never bought crack from anybody locally.

J: We don't buy it, we just get it free.

MRR: You get kicked down?

J: We find 'em on the ground.

MRR: Who else has interviewed Teenage Harlets?

J: Joe from *Express* magazine interviewed us last week.

C: Megan from San Francisco State interviewed us a couple months ago.

J: She was great. We thought she was gonna *hate* us because we were kind of razzing her for a bit. She's asking us, what do we think of George Bush? And we go, "oh, we think he's great, he's been doing a great job." And she totally believed that we are super-supporters of George Bush. That was right at the beginning, so for the rest of the interview she was kind of on edge and uneasy with us. But she wrote the greatest review about us.

C: Yeah, when I read it, I was surprised. She was really fuckin' cool. I think she might've caught on that we weren't being absolutely serious about the George Bush thing. There are some people that don't have a sense of humor about it, which is great. It's so hard to say something to piss people off, you get the normal "fuck you guys," and people are so used to it. If you really wanna upset people, in a joking, kind of fun way, go to Gilman...

J: Say, "George Bush is good."

C: "George Bush for president! George Bush fucking rules!" Everyone's like, *boo! Boo!*

J: They get so mad at you.

C: Really, really upset about it.

J: Freedom of speech isn't ok, you know?

MRR: Sure, that's my perspective.

J: There's nothing more punk rock than going to some punk rock show and pissing everyone off.

C: It's amazing how much of a reaction you can get. I thought people would be like, "Yeah, right, whatever, enough with the George Bush crap."

J: I thought people would figure out we were kidding, but people were intense about that shit. "What? You can't say that!"

C: I guess it says something about the social climate of our country.

MRR: My anarchist skinhead friend Ramsey says. "I don't believe in freedom of speech for people I don't like."

C: He *doesn't* believe in freedom of speech?

MRR: No, absolutely not. Not if you're saying something he don't wanna hear. At least he's up front about it.

C: Yeah, you got the right to not want certain things.

To check out the band's tour dates, releases, and to see more pictures of them, direct your browser to their website, www.teenageharlets.com. They can be reached by conventional mail at 111 Webster St., SF, CA 94117.

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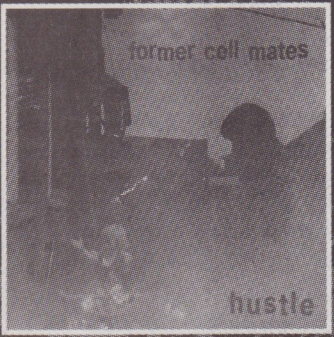

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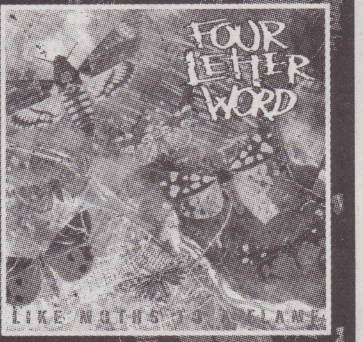

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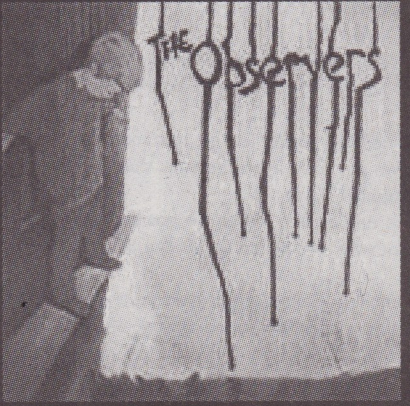

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BOOKS

East Van
Chris Walter

East Van
Chris Walter
268 pages $15.00
Gofuckyerself Press
#34-2320 Woodland Drive Vancouver, BC

When Chris Walter couldn't find a publisher for his first book, *Beer*, he founded Gofuckyerself Press and has since turned out a slew of books (*East Van* is his eighth novel). Some of his books are straight autobiography, while other stuff veers more into fictional territory. It's apparent that Walter goes primarily with what he knows: stories about junkies and thieves, punks and drunks. The feel of his stories is somewhere between pulp novels and Hubert Selby. He has been compared to Iceberg Slim, which isn't all that far off the mark. With this kind of writing, one must keep in mind that there is very little bullshit found in the writing of the school of hard knocks; often, there isn't a lot of subtlety either.

East Van tells the story of a well-to-do executive family man, (named Stephen) and a motley bunch of street dwellers from Vancouver's East Side: (the most integral being Angie, Dill, and Jimmy Jazz).

Stephen works for a property management company that plans to evict the residents of several Downtown Eastside residence hotels so that they can be remodeled and converted into backpacker hostels.

Now, there's a bit of a weak link. Could Walter have thought of a better objective for the management company than a backpacker hostel? I mean, live/work lofts, hoity-toity commercial space, anything, but dude, a hostel? That wouldn't exactly be a cash cow.

Needless to say, the residents of the hotels, which include our rag-tag, crack smoking troop of urchins, are not at all pleased with this plan, and mount a plan to protest their eviction.

Meanwhile, Stephen himself starts a downward spiral that is anything but slow. He quickly develops a taste for crack, and a craving to be done in the ass by prostitutes, habits in which Angie is all too happy to indulge him.

While the junkies and whores living in the SROs go on with their lives, which are almost stable in their unwavering misery, things actually fall apart for Stephen. He has further to fall, and Walter spares no detail in describing how bad things get for him. I have a feeling that creating this character, and tearing him apart might have been Walter's favorite part of writing this book.

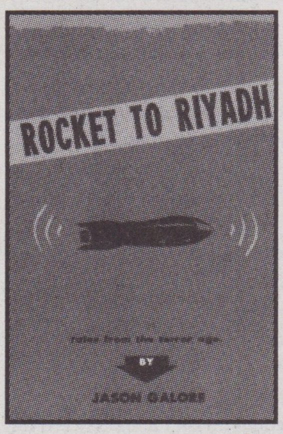
The thing about all of the straitlaced characters in the book is that they somehow seem a little hard to believe. I guess it's that Walter simply knows the people better who are closer to the streets than the suites.

Walter is adept at his craft, despite a few weak spots. His metaphors can be a little confusing, and the clichés he throws in are sometimes cringe worthy. Still, I can't help but respect someone that has decided to go it on his own as a writer, especially with little in the way of formal education.

Whenever I do a review, I consider the following question: who is this for? I mean, who would like it? It seems a more relevant question than "is it good?" In this case, I would say that *East Van* is for fans of literature that's more than a little pulpy: hotel rooms so vividly described that you can almost smell what's under the bed, lots of sex, violence, and drugs and some punks and politics thrown in for good measure.

Chris Walter definitely isn't John Updike, but I can definitely picture him becoming a punk Jim Thompson.

—Andy Shoup



Rocket to Riyadh
Jason Galore
145 pages $7.95
Jason Galore is Famous, LLC
Jason Galore is Famous, 24500 Galena Ave.,
Belle Plaine,
Minnesota 56011

The main thing that Jason Galore's *Rocket to Riyadh* has going for it is that it's easy to relate to. It's a collection of short stories, blogs, reviews, and random thoughts; anything coherent that Galore wrote down, seemingly. But it's the apparent anything-will-do selection process that makes this collection endearing. By showing us a wide range of his writing (from a review of an issue of *X-Men* to "Truth, Fear and the Precursor," a stream of consciousness societal rant), Galore opens himself up and lets you see parts of him that you see in yourself. Of course, by bailing everything he could find into the book, he also lets himself down by including material that really seems unfinished or unnecessary, such as the aforementioned *X-Men* review (which is followed by a *Fantastic Four* review).

Galore writes in an intentionally lazy/sarcastic way, affecting a relaxed air to his writing. This can work well sometimes and lead to some inspired moments. I like the part in "Down with Sickness" where Nabil looks at the temperature on a sign and thinks, "What's that in Celsius?" Being from a country that measures with Celsius, I can relate to having that thought again and again over here.

The story "Earthly Fracture" is, in my opinion, the strongest. It's about a guy coming home at night to sit with his wife, watch the disassembly of the MIR space station and contemplate life. Galore's style really works well here. He makes the main character's shoes easy to slip into. I love the part where he describes the enjoyment of a cigarette and ends by hacking up a piece of phlegm or where he asks, "What do normal people do?" and answers himself with "This."

Some of Galore's imagery can be odd, like the part where a woman answers the phone and reveals the "black laced top of her bra." I couldn't tell if this was supposed to be a sarcastic poke at the typically glamorized, Hollywood style woman (the influence of television and movies on how we view the world is a recurring theme) or just Galore's mind wandering. Also, I don't know if Galore edited this himself, but it could've done with another run through. It might've helped pare down some of the wandering and also could've corrected the not-that-frequent grammatical errors.

The book's first section is all short stories whereas the second section, entitled "Distortion," is composed of articles, essays, and reviews. It's here that the book starts to suffer from unnecessary contributions. As far as reviewing goes Galore is good with comics and OK with music, but I don't get why these reviews are included. I just don't care about THE MONKEES' live release.

Galore's essays, however, have the same power as his stories. Brilliant sometimes, blundering at others. In "That Was Dinner" he asks, "If someone were watching me, what would they think of as they looked at me?"—a thought that anyone who's ever watched television has had. "Cigarettes & Alcohol" is good in how it shows that when it comes to kicking a habit you've usually failed before you've begun. The story that follows this seems to be an expression of the affect of society and media on the thinking process. Kind of descriptive in a stream of conscious way. It's all right, just a little all over the place.

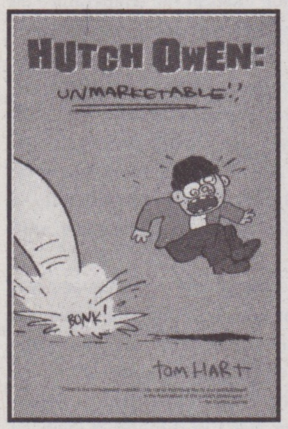
The final third of the book is a collection of Galore's writings, sometimes personal and sometimes not, in relation to politics. The pieces are arranged chronologically, starting with the most recent and working back. The dates stretch from 08/23/04 to 11/07/03. There are some good moments in here, where Galore really hits his point home. One example would be his piece on gay marriage where he comes to the simple conclusion that it should really just be up to gay people. Another good one is the essay "Death to the 80s", where Galore has a cynically nostalgic look at the influence of Reagan on his life.

He's very good at engaging your attention. When I was reading some of the essays I could really imagine myself walking down the street with Galore, listening to him rant. This leads to a problem with some of these pieces, though. They tend to turn into rants. Righteous indignation takes over and spit starts to fly in the argument and then Galore lets himself down because he turns into every single person who says they have a political agenda but are really just spouting slogans and headlines.

His political articles are good in that they provide the necessary punch and are well informed. His conversational way of describing the issues and sarcastic comments could be construed as the usual rallying against everything in sight without proper analysis but he backs up his attacks with the right facts, most of the time. He does occasionally fall into the ol' raising the fist with one hand and holding a mirror in the other carry on. Some may not like these articles because of the blatantly opinionated style but if writing etiquette isn't a big concern for you then you'll be OK with Galore's strong, if not too original, arguments.

Overall, I'd say that I did enjoy this book. Galore does a good job of keeping the theme of the affects of politics, music, and media on our lives through the collection. His shorts stories and essays can be inspired one minute, stupid the next and his political writings are strong if a little preachy. It's in the moments where Galore is writing about just enjoying life and the little adventures that you get into that he becomes most endearing, because this is where he opens himself up the most and truly connects with the reader.

—Craig Cox



Hutch Owen: Unmarketable!!
Tom Hart
194 pages $14.95
Top Shelf Productions
PO Box 1282
Marietta, GA 30061-1282

This book is a collection of stories, most of them featuring Hutch Owen, a young person who has renounced the Rat Race/Money-go-round and is a bum. I can't tell you if Hutch is a teenager or a twenty something, but I like a lot of what he says. Consumerism and commercialism set him off on tirades. He is apparently fairly educated and tries to spread his knowledge. The character is a voice for anyone who feels that our culture is all fucked up and that we all should know better.

And there is a personification of the fucked up culture: Dennis Worner, owner and heartless, greed-driven, operator of Worner Industries. Worner is one of the engines behind our status quo. Super-powerful, Worner can buy anything that stands in his way and treats people, including his employees, like they are his toys to play with or throw away as he sees fit. One particularly grim story begins with Worner hitting golf balls off the roof of his New York City Headquarters into the World Trade Center ruins, aiming the balls so they bounce off recovery workers' hardhats and on into a homeless encampment. The image of a billionaire beaning a firefighter combing the 9-11 wreckage with a fucking golf ball is great anti-capitalist propaganda. If Tom Hart could beam stuff like that into the minds of The Masses, The Revolution would be *right now*! (And right now is still several years too late!). This book is the second Hutch Owen collection. If we get the first collection, we can find out how Hutch and Worner first met, and exactly what made them bitter enemies on a personal level.

This book contains two long stories and a section of shorter material. The first story involves Hutch falling into working for money (He, a "Never Work"-er, tries bartering some of his labor for a cup of coffee and ends up with a job...) and ends with him in face-to-face confrontation with Worner in a helicopter above the "Creativity Camp" Worner has sent his mindless-conformist corporate executives to. Throughout the book (the second long story is the golf ball story and travels from the wealthy preying on the homeless to more destruction in NYC), Hart attacks corporate culture and our willingness to enjoy it even as it eats our souls.

The first story's final scene is one good example of how Tom Hart avoids oversimplifying our world in his work. The clarity of his good/righteous/free vs. evil/craven/conformist dichotomy is thoroughly muddied by a speech from the over-the-top tough-guy Creativity Camp director. The camp director's speech about his wealth and power giving him the freedom to truly enjoy our world was just as convincingly articulated as is Hutch's ascetic approach to freedom in the rest of the book. This is the sort of comic that features disagreements resolved by argument, not fisticuffs. Tom Hart seems capable of understanding multiple points of view, able to write reasonable arguments for both sides in these debates. His skillful writing keeps the evil Worner character from being entirely one-dimensional. (And one of the short stories is about a character that looks like Worner having a crisis of the soul while on vacation in Asia with his consumerist wife, further humanizing the villain.)

I can't say that I appreciate Mr. Hart's scribbly art style as eye candy. However, his art is easy to interpret and keeps the reader moving along quickly. The stories read very well. I really enjoyed this book and recommend it highly!

—Seth Hollander

PLEASE FEED ME
a punk vegan cookbook
BY NIALL MCGUIRK

Please Feed Me: A Punk Vegan Cookbook
Niall McGuirk
200 pages $15.95
Soft Skull Press
71 Bond St., Brooklyn, NY 11217

Let's forget about the cookbook angle for moment. What we have here is a repackaged version of *Document: A Story of Hope*, a book that chronicled the history of Dublin Ireland's Hope Collective, and featured recipes from many of the bands who played Hope gigs over the years.

We hear from Niall & Miriam McGuirk about Hope's formative years in the early 80s, when the great Dublin band Paranoid Visions ruled the roost, and The Membranes were the only British band willing to make the ferry ride to Eire for some gigs.

Hope was an appropriate name for this newly formed entity, as Ireland was pretty bleak place in those days. There were few jobs, few bands, and it was pretty much expected for young people to move out of the country and work in Europe (or America if they were lucky) as soon as they could. But these hopeful kids set out to start something worth sticking around for.

In late 1989, Hope got a big push when Fugazi gave the collective about two-thirds of their earnings from their gig (over $1000!), which helped form a fund to bring more bands over, and helped Hope put out their excellent comp 12", *A*

Statement Is a Weapon in an Empty Hand. (Seek it out; you won't be disappointed.) More folks were to get involved on the collective, like Derek Bynre and Clodagh Murphy, who also contributed writing in this book (although Murphy's goes uncredited).

In the ensuing years Hope would host many great bands such as Jawbreaker, Bikini Kill, Nomeansno, The Ex, Green Day, Chumbawamba, Econochrist, Neurosis, Gorilla Biscuits, and many more. This book dedicates one page to each of the gigs they put on, with an anecdote about the show, and an accompanying recipe, usually by a member of one of the bands involved. Most of the stories are not very exciting taken individually, but when you take a step back and look at where Hope started and all that it was able to accomplish, a whole, more interesting story comes into focus.

I have nothing but admiration for these folks, having visited Ireland in the early 90s and witnessed several of the shows they put on. In sharp contrast to the day-to-day reality, these gigs made Dublin seem intense, exciting, and vibrant. And indeed it was when it came to music. I wish this book would have focused more on the incredible local bands Dublin had in those days. I don't have a recording of McGuirk's band Not Our World, but I still have their "Boycott Unilever" song stuck in my head every once in a while. The singer went on to form a Fugazi copycat band called Tension, that was actually really great. And what about Dog Day? They were a fantastic Mega City 4-like melodic punk band who should've been as big as any Lookout group. Ciunas were one of the best hardcore bands ever, why no stories about them? I understand that for them, the foreign bands were way more exciting than them and their friends' bands, but the last thing anyone needs is more writing about and pictures of Fugazi.

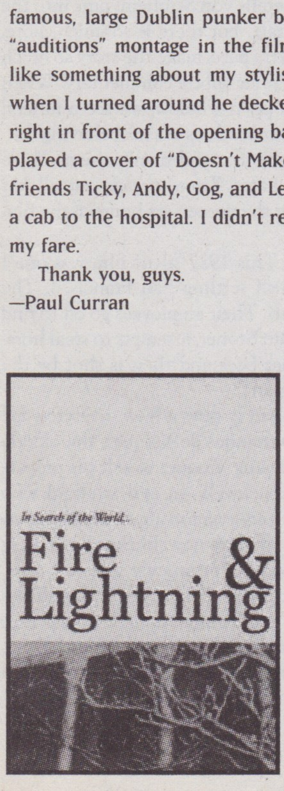
As for the recipes, well I think it may have been a mistake for Soft Skull to bill this as a cookbook. Sure it's got loads of great recipes, but it's also got a lot of shite recipes and joke recipes and there's no index. Still, the artichoke casserole with pine nuts was delicious, and vegans and vegetarians can always use new recipes, right?

Another complaint I have about this edition is that it was poorly proofread. Some pages have text cut off at the end (FYI, the last words of the story by Smithy of Wat Tyler on page 57 should be "riotous laughter from everyone else" and the last word on page 92 is "interest"), and the baked potato recipe on page 97 is mislabled "Vegan Pancakes," for example.

A final correction I want to make is to the story of the Nomeansno show at the New Inn in April, 1990. It says that someone "hurt their ankle dancing" and that the Hope collective gave them £20 for their cab fare to the hospital. I was that dancer, and what really happened was that I got punched in the face by a famous, large Dublin punker by the name of Bibbles. (You can see him in the "auditions" montage in the film *The Commitments.*) Apperently Bibbles didn't like something about my stylish moves. He tapped me on the shoulder, and when I turned around he decked me right in the face. I feel over onto the stage right in front of the opening band with my broken nose gushing blood as they played a cover of "Doesn't Make It Alright" without skipping a beat. Luckily, my friends Ticky, Andy, Gog, and Lee dragged me out of there and got me safely into a cab to the hospital. I didn't realize until reading this book that Hope had paid my fare.

Thank you, guys.

—Paul Curran



Fire & Lightning:
In Search of the World, Vol. 2
Christopher Hatteras
72 pages $5 ppd.
Ivory Bell *
PO Box 983. * Chapel Hill, NC * 27514
www.ivorybell.com

The premise is solid—actually leave America behind, move to a saner place. Learn a useful skill & make a sustainable, enriching home. Sure, you might miss those pleasant (yet black holed) hours at the coffee shop, the shows, the sweetly looping walks around the college town, but that's a small, finite price nowadays.

Fire & Lightning is the "text personal to Christopher Hatteras," the text a tricky spot between journal, public letter, zine, & novella. Here Hatteras tells of moving from North Carolina to Stockholm—his brief visit back home after traveling & all the unfinished business with loved ones.

"I thought of the desperate steps we ran, headlong, the spells we cast in secret, all the ways we sought frantically to prepare ourselves for the event that would change our lives forever." Do you consider such lines overblown? Or touching? The end of Chapter One echoes such concerns when he asks, *"Are our life stories as amazing as they feel?"* To the individual, of course, and their close circles, but as the tales ripple out further from the narrator's voice, it's tougher waters.

When Hatteras employs a short, declarative style, the storytelling works great. Like this scene from the airport:

> *"I met my family at the baggage claim and we pulled my suitcases. I was chauffeured along the lanes and byways of my youth. We caught up and we talked about the weather. We came to the house and it was the same. We cooked food together and played scrabble. We listened to our voices, telling about our lives. We made small talk. All the things circumstance had stolen. We embraced because we could, because we loved each other and were in front of each other."*

The tired, timeless quality of small-town scenes comes across well too: *"For three hours I stood there in the record store carrying on basically the same conversation. Then I went out and walked around."* Contrast this to the parts of Hatteras describing learning carpentry, getting treatment for Celiac disease, and doing home childcare for his son—the choice to move seems obvious and life-affirming for him.

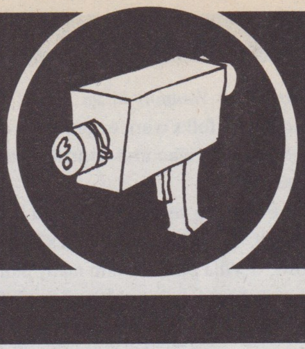
Which fits with the two big sections entitled "freedom" & "responsibility." On page 56 we get the quintessential epiphany to leave behind the old worries, the old country. On a rooftop, looking at the stars. Sure, it's maybe stereotypical, but have you not had such moments? Real and undeniable as the desire to quit your life and start anew in some socialist city. Work, family, art, & lifestyle choices—these are the good conversations. About whether such choices are normative and stultifying, or challenging & radical as we learn and age & never stop questioning.

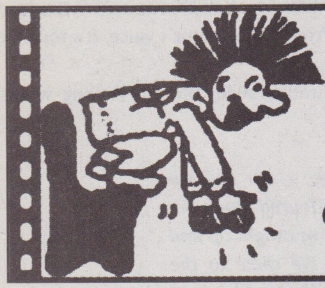
There's a typo or two & a few bad line-breaks, but it's like the catch in a friend's voice as they explain to you their new plan. Human and equal parts endearing, annoying, & understandable. Similarly, when the voice becomes grandiose (*"And we glide through life, gazing ever deeper into the maw of terror that opens slowly before us..."*), it's a bit much. Not unlike people speaking of their kids (or pets). Sure, it's valid & life changing for their nuclear unit, but the rest of us hermetic refuseniks exchange awkward looks.

Just as browsers of teeming bookshelves & distros in poorly-lit rooms will catch the whiff of CrimethInc. on *Fire & Lightning,* and move on. Even opening the book, there are four surreptitious quotes before we get to the author's tale. So much build-up for 72 pages! But Hatteras avoids the self-righteous, self-indulgent, & self-serving hoo-ha that makes *Evasion, Inc.* such a treat to laugh at around the kitchen table. The desire here is palpable & well translated. Meaning, you could read many, many worse things as you head down to the highway with your friends & band mates to play at a liberal arts college. Good luck, Christopher.

— Travis Fristoe.

MOVIES





BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

ANOTHER GIRL, ANOTHER PLANET

I am not that much of a science fiction film fan. I will probably go see the new Star Wars film (it can't be any worse than the last one), but generally I don't bother. It is not something that interests me. Regardless, when I heard Hal Hartley was doing a sci-fi film, I was interested.

The Girl From Monday is like many other science fiction films. It is set in a familiar future where some powerful entity rules over humans who don't really resist. In this case it is Triple M, the Major Multimedia Monopoly. Triple M is an advertising agency that through a "revolution" has turned the world into a dictatorship of the consumer. It definitely seems possible. In this world everyone has a UPC code tattooed on his or her wrist. If you don't have a good credit rating, you are nothing. The way to increase your credit rating is to have sex, but you can't enjoy it. Enjoying sex for pleasure labels you a terrorist out to destroy society. You probably hate "freedom" too.

Naturally, there is a resistance movement. The leader of it is Jack, the man responsible for the ad campaign that started this world. He still works for Triple M, but he is slowly being taken off the good accounts like Brutal Youth Children's Wear. He organized a break in to the company's news station and has become paranoid and suicidal. When his operatives arrive at the news station, someone else has already broken in. Everyone fears it is a set up.

Jack works with Cecile, a good citizen who is worried about her credit rating. She and Jack have a brief tryst that goes wrong. She makes an insurance claim to reclaim her attractiveness. She befriends William, Jack's main operative and accidentally discovers people having sex for pleasure in his apartment building. She is completely unaware of what goes on in the underground. The police break up the party and she is arrested. She is sentenced to "hard time" teaching high school.

There are moments of humor in **The Girl From Monday**, but overall the film seems too literal. Hartley continually beats his anti-consumerist message into your head. I got it the first time. Judging by what I assume will be **The Girl From Monday**'s audience, this is the wrong way to go. This is by no means a commercial film so the audiences that should see this film for the message most likely won't. Those of us who do are probably already aware that excess consumerism is bad. (www.possiblefilms.com/)

Eros has many meanings. In Greek, it is sexual love. The Greek God Eros was responsible for lust, love, and sex. In Freudian psychology, Eros is the life instinct innate in all humans. It is the desire to create life and favors productivity and construction.[1] I should have researched that before going to see the film **Eros**. Then I would have known to expect a lot of nudity.

Eros is made up of three short films: Kar Wai Wong's "The Hand," Steven Soderbergh's "Equilibrium," and Michelangelo Antonioni's "Il Filo Pericoloso Delle Cose." "The Hand" is the story of a prostitute who seduces a tailor's young apprentice. He falls in love with her, but she continually rejects him in hopes of finding a more important husband. It is beautifully shot and a heartbreaking story.

"Equilibrium" is the most straightforward and is filled with Hollywood stars. It is set in a psychiatrist office. The patient is an advertising agent for an alarm clock company who is obsessed with the fact that the company will never surpass the invention of the snooze button. He also has erotic dreams. It is shot in a black and white noir style. The resolution completely ruins all that proceeds. It is just too obvious.

The reason I went to see **Eros** was to see the Antonioni segment. The 92-year old Italian director has survived a stroke and is still directing, which amazes me. "Il Filo Pericoloso Delle Cose" tells of a wealthy, young and attractive couple that seem dissatisfied with their lives. They break up. The man has an affair with another woman. Later the two women meet on the beach. Nothing really happens, but the women are always naked. I wonder what Antonioni was thinking, but then I figure if I was 92, I'd make whatever film I wanted. Who cares if anyone gets it or if it has any meaning at all?

One of the many great things about living in San Francisco is the wide variety of movie theaters and films you can see in a theater. The Balboa Theater (www.thebalboatheater.com) recently had a series called 'The Reel San Francisco," which featured films shot all in San Francisco. They showed some obvious ones like *Dirty Harry* and *Bullitt*, but they also featured some obscure ones. I went to see two silent films. The first was **Greed**. **Greed** is the legendary 1924 Erich von Stroheim film that was originally nine hours long. The studio edited it down to two and a half-hours. It would probably surprise most people that for a long silent film, the story is so involving that the time flies by.

Greed follows Mac McTeague. He is working as a miner when his mother decides that he needs a better career. After a dentist visits town, she determines that dentistry is the job for Mac. He goes off to train with the dentist. Years later, he opens up a dental office on Polk Street in San Francisco. It is there that he meets his future wife Trina. Trina comes in to his office with her boyfriend/cousin (yes, it is proudly announced in the film) Marcus. When Mac works on Trina's teeth, he falls in love with her. When Mac tells Marcus about it, he allows Mac to date her. He even arranges their first date.

On the night of Mac and Trina's engagement party, news comes that Trina has won $5,000 dollars in the lottery. She had bought the ticket in Mac's office the first day she went in there with Marcus. Trina becomes obsessed with the money and Marcus becomes jealous that he could have married Trina had the money for himself. Mac and Trina marry and the money begins to ruin everyone's lives.

The great thing about **Greed** is all the small details von Stroheim puts into the film. It could have been your average morality tale, but there is so much more. Each character is well developed and the small extra parts make the story so much more interesting. Von Stroheim evens throws in some subtle commentary. When Mac and Trina are being married in front of an open window, we see a funeral going by on the street below. When Trina's younger brothers are misbehaving during the wedding, their father picks them up by one arm and spanks them. There were no politically correct characters in 1924. Later, Trina spreads out all her money on her bed and rolls around in it. I am sure the unseen six hours of the film are probably equally great.

Playing with **Greed** was **Old San Francisco**. This 1927 silent film was one I had never heard of. It starts off with the Spanish settling San Francisco. The Vasquez family controls the city until the gold rush. Their employees go off to find their own fortunes. The leader of a mutiny, Captain Stoner, attempts to steal horses from the estate. He shoots one of the Vasquez boys and then is shot by the other. The Vasquez's manage to defend their property.

Then we move to the '20s where San Francisco is now a busy, overcrowded city. A lawyer and his nephew go to see Don Hernandez de Vasquez, the elderly current owner of the estate. The lawyer's client wants Vasquez to sell his property. He refuses and we are introduced to Chris Buckwell, an evil landlord who forces people to give up their property. It wasn't very comforting to see that San Francisco landlords were just as evil back then as they are now. Buckwell has a big secret that will ruin his career if someone discovers it. Fortunately someone does.

This measly description of **Old San Francisco** doesn't even touch on all the bizarre aspects of this film. I will mention there is a Chinese midget who is kept in a cage. Also, the climatic ending comes completely out of the blue. I think everyone needs to see this great film. Unfortunately, it is not available on video or DVD.

I was also going to see **Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room** (www.enronmovie.com), which I am sure is an enthralling and interesting documentary, but the idea of it just seemed too depressing. I just couldn't deal with seeing how a bunch of greedy jerks ripped everyone off, lied, and got away with it all. What the fuck is wrong with people?

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to me c/o MRR, PO Box 406760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. Email me at carolynmrr@juno.com if you have a film screening in San Francisco. I will go see it.

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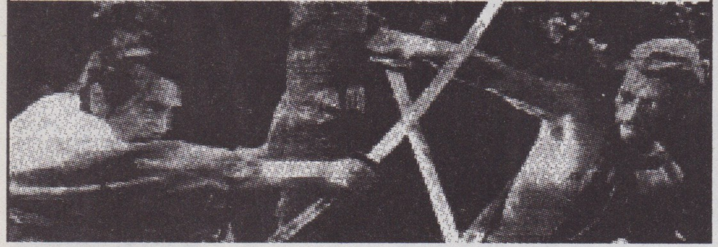
[1] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eros

FINAL CUT

BY STEVEN SPINALI



SMART GUYS FINISH LAST

You've got to hand it to them. The "smart guys" from Enron, oft cited as "the most innovative business in America," were so ingenious that they managed to outsmart themselves. Judging from the evidence in Alex Gibney's documentary, **Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room**, there were few businesses around so thoroughly versed in the vocabulary of sham and deceit, and able to keep the whole thing secret for so long.

And their idea was rather ingenious. While the stock exchanges speculate in the perceived versus the actual value of companies, Enron was envisioned as a stock market for energy. By distributing energy to the lowest bidder, users would theoretically get the most competitive price, while Enron earned a transaction royalty.

The business model was so robust that Enron's Chairman Ken Lay and CEO Jeff Skilling even planned an Internet division, hoping to distribute bandwidth like megawatts. At one point, they considered selling the weather. It seems the folk at Enron never suffered from a lack of ideas—just the lack of scruples.

How did it all get so out of hand?

Well, according to this documentary (and the book upon which it was based), it comes down to four key people, though a wide variety of prominent banks and funds were complicit in Enron's power games. Ken Lay, with a trusting face and receding hairline, was the face of Enron. A philanthropist and power broker, Lay as CEO or Chairman of the Board won the trust of his employees, and was a compelling spin-master. When faced with a damning article from *Fortune* magazine, he chalked it up to a rivalry with *Business Week*, who'd given Enron glowing marks just a week before.

Jeff Skilling, CEO for only half a year, was a nervy executive who expected his employees to make money for him. He was the one who instituted the draconian employment practice of managing "on the curve"; when employment evaluations came in, the lowest 20% of Enron's employees would be fired, making the organization an experiment on social Darwinism. This didn't assure that they'd retain their best workers; rather, it made for an environment of increased competition, a hothouse environment where only the greediest and most energetic workers remained.

Andrew Fastow, Skilling's close protégé, was the man charged with managing the accounts. Known for berating his workers, Festow developed a labyrinthine set of "special purpose entities"—fake accounts that would give Enron the appearance of health, even as it started crumbling in on itself. Cheeky humor abounds in his list of bogus investment accounts, including "M Smart" (after Maxwell Smart of the TV comedy *Get Smart*) and "M Yass," which doesn't need much explanation. Fastow was the first of the main players to offer information to investigators in exchange for a reduced prison term.

The final member of the quartet was the enigmatic Lou Pai. Although born in Nanjing, he sunk roots in Maryland and gained a reputation as a gutsy trader with a tenuous grasp on business ethics. His one weakness was his fascination with strip clubs; he would eventually marry one of the strippers before quitting Enron and retiring to a 77,000-acre ranch in New Mexico. He was also the first of the top managers to cash in his Enron stock—but well before Enron finally folded.

Skilling accepted the position of CEO under one condition: that Enron be valued with "HFV" accounting. Hypothetical Future Value basically meant that they could base Enron's value on the predicted value that they could draw out of thin air. It's like a futures market where you get to plug in your own hyper-inflated numbers. Predictably, while other corporations went through cyclic ups and downs, Enron rode higher and higher. (It was convenient that no one ever saw their statements; they were never published.)

Although Enron's financial health was built in clouds and air, there's nothing imaginary about the trail of misery the company left in its wake. As Enron lied about its corporate health quarter after quarter, its employees filled their 401k's with Enron stock. When Enron started making a tailspin on the stock market, Kenneth Lay urged his workers to keep their money in Enron. When it was all done, Skilling, Lay, Festow, and other executives had prematurely dumped their portfolios and stole away with millions in company bonuses. The Enron rank and file ended up with a $6,000 severance check.

Enron reserved the worst for California. When Republican governor Pete Wilson opened state energy to deregulation, Enron saw a potential goldmine. Poring over California's energy codes for loopholes, Enron execs developed a series of scams aiming to fleece California. Inexplicably, power generators would go offline, or be unavailable because of maintenance. Out-of-state concerns might buy excess energy, and then resell the same energy later on at inflated profits. Brownouts and blackouts threatened every day—while at the same time, Republican politicos (with screen star Arnold Schwarzenegger invited) pondered their next move in secret meetings.

Thousands of retirees whose investment accounts included Enron stock experienced financial ruin. Soon worth just pennies on the dollar, the Enron stock was just one element of portfolios devalued by an increasingly insecure business environment. On tapes, we hear cackling traders joking about "Grandma Millie," whose life savings was sucked dry as Enron gets the cash it needs to keep the illusion alive.

The house of cards started shifting in the wind when *Fortune* magazine writer Bethany McLean asked Skilling point blank why Enron's numbers didn't add up. (The markets began paying closer attention when he responded by calling her an "asshole.") And then Enron employee Sherron Watkins' "smoking gun" memo testified to the company's profoundly irregular business practices. When an Enron exec committed suicide, it was only a matter of time before the company would follow suit.

So far, fifteen high execs from Enron have tendered guilty pleas, and sentences have ranged between one and five years. Of the thirty-odd players, only one has been found not guilty. But 2005 is the year of truth for Lay, Skilling, Festow, and other corporate players, including a trio of British bankers who are fighting extradition.

Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room is at its best when it avoids the easy jokes and comic inserts from movies and industrial films. As it happens, there's more than enough irony from the film's major players, and Enron's increasingly disgruntled employees. When Lay offers a rosy outlook for Enron (even as it lost 80% of its value, the first anonymous question from employees was, "Are you on crack?") With Skilling having quit and news reports deflating the stock, even Lay isn't every convincing as he tries to stave off the inevitable.

If you think that Enron is capable of epic duplicity, imagine the plight of the anti-hero in the acclaimed South Korean import, **Oldboy**. One night, drunken salaryman Oh Dae-Su (Choi Min-Sik) vanishes from a street in the middle of downtown Seoul. He wakes up in a miniature jail cell. It has wall-to-wall carpet, a queen-size bed, a television, and daily meals shoved under his door. Every night, sleeping gas drifts through vents to stymie any plans for escape.

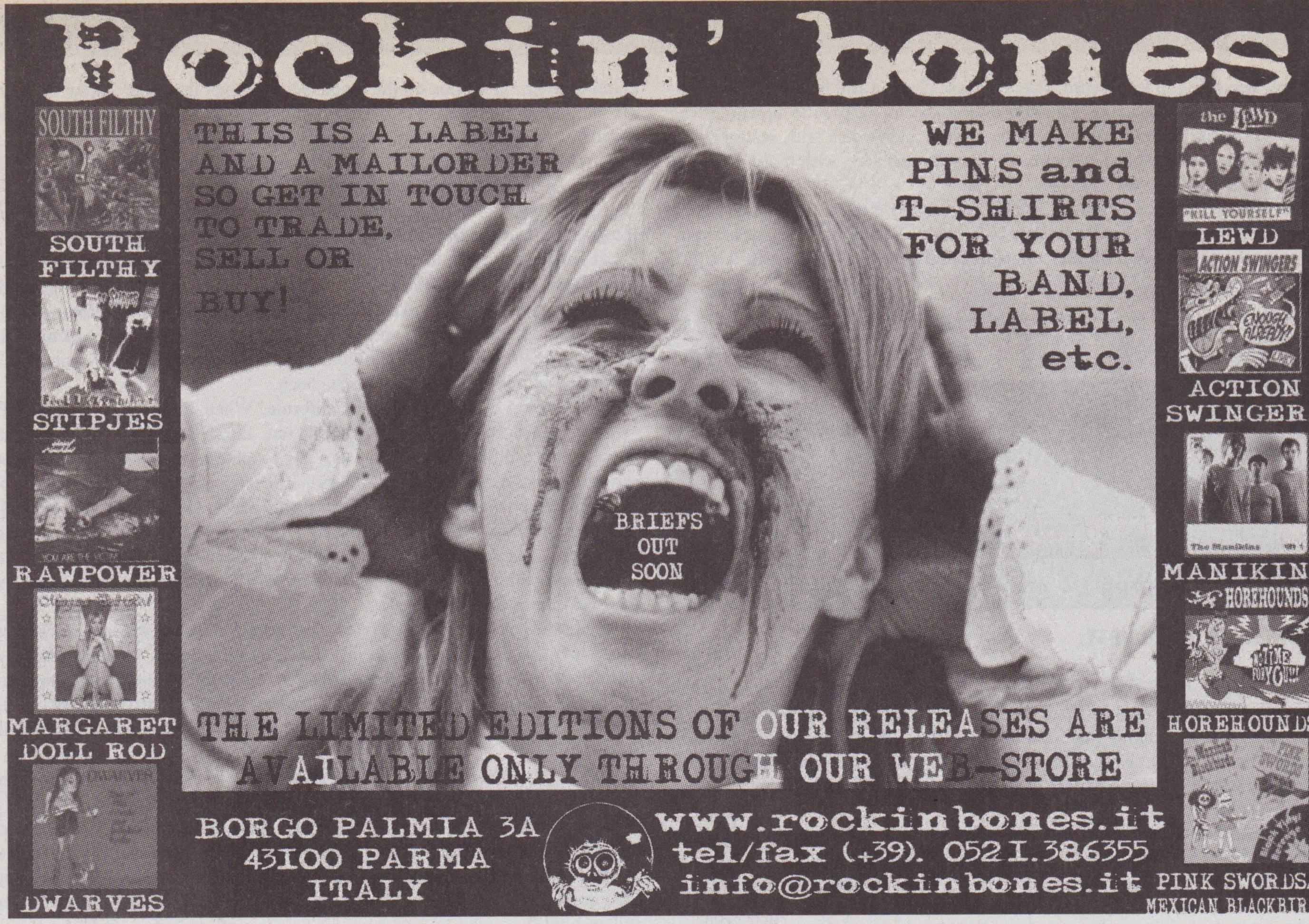
Every day, Dae-Su keeps his sanity (or what's left of it), with punishing martial arts routines that leave welts on his fists. He hopes the discipline will be useful if he ever needs to exact vengeance.

Fifteen years later, as abruptly as it began, Dae-Su finds himself on the streets again, free. He's consumed with questions and choking with rage. His first meal out, he orders "anything that's alive."

Dai-Su manages to subdue a crowd of triads (with a hammer), glowers with Charles Manson-like intensity at anyone who seems suspicious (that's everybody), and is soon shocked to find the game hasn't yet begun in earnest. He has one week to discover why he was imprisoned, and by whom.

Oldboy seems to suggest that ignorance is as imprisoning as any jail, and that making sense of life can be more important than vengeance. Along the way, the road is torturous for Dae-Su, and almost as brutal for the audience. The tooth-cracking climax is enough to make anyone squirm, and the plot's shocking reversals are beyond even those of your typical Korean film. It's rough going, maybe a little contrived, but somehow—against all expectations—the whole thing turns out to make perfect sense.

It'll be a while before you forget this one.



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Reviewers: (TB) Tim Brooks, (MC) Mitch Cardwell, (RC) Rob Coons, (CC) Carl Cordova, (PC) Paul Curran, (JD) Jip Daems, (AD) Andy Darling, (DD) Dr. Dante, (SD) Sean Dougan, (JF) Jonathan Floyd, (JH) Jeff Heermann, (VH) Vince Horner, (CS) Chris Hubbard, (KK) Kenny Kaos, (CK) Carolyn Keddy, (RK) Ramsey Kanaan, (WK) Will Kinser, (WL) Will Weber Kneitel, (EL) Elliott Lange, (RL) Ray Lujan, (HM) Hal MacLean, (AM) Allan McNaughton, (GN) Golnar Nikpour, (BR) Bruce Roehrs, (MS) Martin Sorrondeguy, (SS) Steve Spinali, (BS) Brian Stern, (RW) Ryan Wells, (SW) Shane White.

7 SHOT SCREAMERS – " Keep the Flame Alive" CD

This is the way I like my psychobilly—dirty, sleazy, drenched in cheap bourbon and enough punk rock to elevate it from those good ol' pompadour rednecks. Ain't no Southern Californian fake posturing from these pimped-up cats; stinking of GUN CLUB and the MAD DADDIES with some of the damaged rock 'n' roll of JOHNNY THUNDERS. The real thing. (SD)

(Haunted Down, 1658 N. Milwaukee Ave, 169 Chicago, IL 60647, www.hauntedtownrecords.com)

ADRENALS – "Lumine Fever" CD

Fairly generic female-fronted punk from Springfield, MO. They sound a little like JACK KILLED JILL. (AD)

(no address)

AGATHOCLES – "Superiority Overdose" LP

Umpteenth full-length (a new one, not a reissue) from this age-old Belgian mincecore trio. Good recording quality on this one, and a solid batch of tunes with their trademark gurgling vocals, acute socialist, anti-fascist lyrics, and blazing grind. Solid stuff, but this one also strikes me as somewhat less urgent and intense (and a bit sloppier) than previous efforts, such as the great *Razor Sharp Daggers* LP from the mid-90s. Still, diehard AGATHOCLES fans will seemingly never have to worry about Jan and crew not delivering the goods. (EL)

(SOA, c/o Paolo Petralia, via Oderisi da Gubbio 67/69 00146, Roma, ITALY, www.soarecords.it)

ANOTHER DEAD JULIET – "Here Lies" CD

For the record, I fucking hate pretentious band names like this. With that said, let's tackle the tunes. This is new school hardcore with a touch of metal guitar tone throughout all the songs. On the slower parts they have hints of UNBROKEN, but mostly this is fast, straight-up hardcore. Plus they keep all the songs to just over a minute long, which is always a bonus. On the negative side of things, the cover art looks pretty bad and is kind of an eyesore. (RC)

(Trash Art, PO Box 725, Providence, RI 02901, www.soundandculture.com)

ARMAGEDOM – "Apogeu da Insanidade, Crepúsculo da Humanidade" EP

ARMAGEDOM formed in Brazil over 20 years ago, and though the lineup has changed over the years, the band is still churning out raw, ugly hardcore. This new release is decidedly less metallic than their split with FORÇA MACABRA that came out a few years back (but was recorded early on in their career). With musical cues from both DISCHARGE and the wealth of excellent bands from Brazil over the years, the EP features four tracks of dark and driving punk sung in Portuguese. I like the (limited) use of echo on the vocals and the overall rough quality of this record. Comes on blue vinyl with a sticker. (CS)

(Absurd, www.absurdrecords.rg3.net)

A PIECE OF SHIT – "Red Blood"

Six songs of loose, upbeat, mid-tempo hardcore, with noisy off-time parts, a handful of complex time changes, some emotive DC-style guitar leads, and screamy vocals. A PIECE OF SHIT doesn't conform to the cookie cutter approach in their song arrangements, and stylistically they are hard to completely pin down; parts of the disc sound like a hybrid of CHROME and IGNITION, with FEEDERZ' *Teachers in Space*- style drumming. If you can imagine that sort of crossover you are crazy, and you probably would want to hear this. I'd be interested to hear more from A PIECE OF SHIT. (BS)

(Zero Gravity, 2-4-9-408 Ooshiba-Chou Nishi-Ku, Hiroshima City, JAPAN, www.apos.nobody.jp)

ARMISTICE – "Fluff and Stuff" LP

While never a personal favorite, SoCal's ARMISTICE has a nice surprise for loyal fans. This pulls together sixteen tracks from compilations and an EP, and adds some unreleased songs for those who think they had everything; the unreleased stuff lacks the production of the other material. Imagine your basic, rumbling crust attack topped by RUDIMENTARY PENI vocals, and informed by basic progressive politics, and you get a basic picture of why they might appeal. (SS)

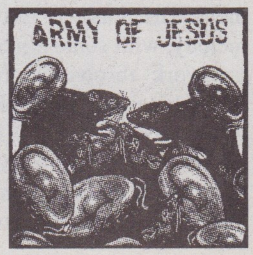
(Despotic, PO Box 832, Long Beach CA, 90801)

7 Shot screamers

A PIECE OF SHIT
Red Blood

lumine fever
THE adrenals

ARMAGEDOM
Apogeu da Insanidade
Crepúsculo da Humanidade



ARMY OF JESUS – "Rats in the Walls" EP

Crazy cover: rats, human ears, blood... WTF? These Austin dudes belt out some gnarly, gritty, basic, hardcore punk. In this day and age of stylized, produced, over-layered-with-guitars hardcore, this stuff sounds very refreshing (for lack of a more punk-sounding word). It's got a lot of early-80s influences (BLACK FLAG, NEGATIVE APPROACH, maybe even some European thrash), as well as some modern, heavy sounds. You'll be too busy thrashing to worry about all that anyway. They write some hella violent (in a good way) lyrics including the line, "When Ward Cleaver loses it, pigs and bosses die!" (an ode to Texas's HUGH BEAUMONT EXPERIENCE, perhaps?), and there's a nice little scribbling in the lyric sheet: "Fuck all you careerists." Hell yes, dudes. (PC)

(AOJ, 1600 A Wheless, Austin, TX 78723, chokekore@yahoo.com)

ASBESTOS – "To the Memory of the War Victim" 2xLP

To the Memory of the War Victim is a double-LP discography of ASBESTOS from Japan. This release encompasses their output from 1987-1991, and it includes tracks from the cassette tape, LP, EP and a few comp tracks. If you have never heard them before you can expect some super gruff crustcore with an occasional guitar solo and harsh growling vocals that are reminiscent of Sakevi from GISM. A few of their later tracks are a slower and a bit more metal, but don't let that stop you because most of these tunes are raging! (RC)

(Putrid Filth Conspiracy, Box 7092, 200 42 Malmo, SWEDEN)

AVERSION – "Where Man Fear to Tread" CD

This was a pleasant surprise in an otherwise thin month for reviews so far. Straight out of Sweden, this is AVERSION's first recorded output and it's completely packed full of intensity and passion. Musically, and even a bit vocally, they remind me of the BLACK HAND, which is a good thing. They have a female singer who belts out throaty lyrics of apocalyptic doom and despair with a good sense of vocal placement. The music is heavy, with a sense of melody, with some almost black-metal guitar work thrown in for good measure. Everything is in the right place here, and I will surely listen to this in the future. It will be nice to see how these folks progress since this is already so good. The only problem I have is that the artwork is so dark that it's hard to tell what it is. (WK)

(Not Enough Mailbox 1013, Lilla Kungsgatan 2, 411 4I GBG, SWEDEN, www.aversion.tk)

BASTARD SONS OF THE APOCALYPSE – "Merciless Slaughter" EP

D-beat Texas fucking style. Lo-fi recording, songs about death/destruction and music lifted straight off DISCHARGE's *Why*? 12" with a touch of TOTALITÄR thrown in for good measure. Flippancy aside, this totally fucking rips. Not one ounce of originality, but these Texans are *waaay* better at it than most. Best D-beat record of the year. (TB)

(540, 1012 Brodie St, Austin, TX 78704)

BATHTUB SHITTER – "Wall of World is Words" CD

Any day I get to review a BATHTUB SHITTER album is a good day in my book. This is a repress of a 10" of the same name originally released a few years back, now on CD with a couple extra tracks. You get more of their trademark fecal-obsessed brutal grinding with Masato's paint-peeling changes between high-pitched yelps and toilet-flushing growls, which are all the better after seeing him in the *Giants of Grind* DVD (reviewed elsewhere in this issue) where he pulls them off live with no effects. A trio of covers (EXTREME NOISE TERROR, SCUM, and HOLY MOSES) keeps things interesting, as does the usual seeing-life-through-the-brown-eye perspective of such songs as "M.A.D.S" (that's "Mentality Against the Delicious Shits"). As ever, this is crucial bowel-rumbling grind. (EL)

(Power it Up, Postfach 1114, 38156 Vechelde, GERMANY, www.power-it-up.de)

BEYOND DESCRIPTION / JILTED – split CDEP

Split CDs are a dicey proposition. Split anythings can be tough, because (as we all know), there is almost always a winner and a loser; one band always weighs the other down. In the history of split releases, the only two I can think of off the top of my head on which the bands are both excellent and totally evenly matched are WRETCHED/INDIGESTI and TALK IS POISON/DEATHREAT. I know I'm forgetting stuff, but I'm just trying to make a point. Anyway, as always seems to be the case with split CDs, the band I like better is second on the disc. In this case it's long running Japanese band BEYOND DESCRIPTION, who combines classic, burly Japcore vocals and guitar leads with a crustier sound and aesthetic. Unlike a lot of classic Japanese hardcore bands, BEYOND DESCRIPTION hasn't gone too rock or slowed down their approach. In fact, I like them better now than when I first heard them on their split with DETESTATION. JILTED, from Italy, plays a faster, raspier, more chaotic brand of raw hardcore punk. The vocals are intense, and along with some of the guitar riffs they call to mind recent Swedish greats MARTYRDÖD. JILTED's songs, however, are a bit more complex and obtuse, which makes them seem just a bit less compelling than that band. Altogether a worthwhile split, and almost totally evenly matched, though it's up to you to decide whether or not you want to try to track down yet another CD-only release from Japan. (GN)

(Forest, Ceramica2 #301, 2-1-37 Minami, Kokubunji, Tokyo 185-0021, JAPAN)

BIRDFLESH – "Live @ Giants of Grind" CD

Nobody likes live CDs right? A bunch of songs you probably already have with far poorer sound quality and maybe a decent heckle or two—if you're lucky. So it's testament to just how utterly fuckin' ripping BIRDFLESH is live that I'm loving this disc. Aside from some atrocious layout design, this record is pretty perfect, and although it's not like you can hear their goofy costumes on the disc you get the idea with the cover photos and the idiotic-yet-somehow-hilarious between song banter, "Alright—the song of the mouth of the cat of the breath... Catmouth!!" I've always thought it's amazing that these guys are fucking around in troll masks and flippers while dishing out grind that's faster, tighter, and more brutal than ninety percent of groups trying to be tough and evil. One of few live albums I'm happy to own. (EL)

(Power it Up, Postfach 1114, 38156 Vechelde, GERMANY, www.power-it-up.de)

BLACK COUGAR SHOCK UNIT – "Hello Black Cougar Shock Unit" CDEP

While the new full length *Godzilla Tripwire* is the meat, this little EP is definitely the gravy. This band is a real favorite, so excuse me if I start gushing. Super driving, rocking punk that defies comparison, but if you throw in some NAKED RAYGUN, the more driving No Idea bands, and even some BIG BLACK and BLACK FLAG you'd start to get the picture. Alex Ulloa is getting more menacing and dark as time passes, this EP and the new full length are his most intense work to date. Ulloa's vocals are as strong as ever (remember folks, its ex HOUSE ON FIRE/PANTHRO

UK UNITED 13 here), and the new improved backline brings the fucking rock. DEVO and the BUZZCOCKS are dismantled in true SHOCK UNIT style at the end of the disc. Fuck Yeah! (TB)
(Newest Industy, Unit 100, 61 Wellfield Road, Cardiff, CF243DG, UNITED KINGDOM)

BLACK COUGAR SHOCK UNIT – "Godzilla Trip Wire" CD

Wow, I've been waiting six years for this record, ever since PANTHRO UK UNITED 13's *Sound of a Gun* came out in 1999. I don't want to harp on about the ex-member thing but PUKU13 were, in my humble opinion, the best band of (at least the latter part of the) nineties, and they only really released two EPs and an album. Anyway, since then I've followed the paper trail and got everything by everyone even remotely associated (sometimes wrongly) with the band—be it SUPERCHINCHILLARESCUEMISSION, UNITAS, CRO(W)S, HOUSE ON FIRE etc.—I got 'em all, and although there's some great stuff there, I was always kind of disappointed. Well, the day has come where something has matched up with *Sound of a Gun*, and it's *Godzilla Trip Wire*. Last year's mini album was good but it was just a taster for this. Like the aforementioned PANTHRO, BLACK COUGAR SHOCK UNIT alternates between great, dirge-y, loud rockin' punk rock (that would not have sounded that out of place on Amphetamine Reptile) with some of the most chilling, hair-raising anthems this side of NAKED RAYGUN. When it's noisy it's good, but when they go for the heartstrings—man, these guys soar like no other. You could argue that punk is dead and has been for decades, but when I hear bands like this I'll happily continue to flog the corpse. Besides, how can you not like a band that mentions both HP Lovecraft and Terry Bradshaw on their thanks list? (AD)
(Newest Industry, Unit 100, Wellfield Rd, Cardiff, CF24 3DG, UNITED KINGDOM)

BLACK TIME – "Beat of the Traps / Crawlin'" 45

Oh yeah! Primitive and dirty and very CRAMPS-esque. Drummer Mr. Stix pounds on the drums like nobody's business then the guitarist offers an homage to LINK WRAY. Surfy, garagey, and catchy as hell, this is great. (CK)
(Yakisakana, 51, Rue Renaudel, 76100 Rouen, FRANCE, ronan.yakisakana@wanadoo.fr)

THE BLASTOFFS – "Sin to Win" CD

Astounding in their mediocrity, the BLASTOFFS play punk music at a 10th grade level, with the execution of a bunch of 23-year-olds. Their songs are mind-numbingly unspectacular—something like MOTÖRHEAD meets SCREECHING WEASEL and YOUTH BRIGADE. Photoshop save my soul. (WL)
(www.theblastoffs.com)

BLOODY TEARS – "Downhanded" CD

Painful name, catchy music. Starts off with a cover (ever a good idea?) of "C'mon Up" and then lurches into a punchy CD of sorta-borderline 60-ish Hammond organ rock with the requisite punliness in place. Original it ain't, but I have a weakness for such things. (JH)
(Licorice Tree, PO Box 92783, Austin, TX 78709, www.licoricetree.com)

THE BLOWCHUNKS – "Hey Stupid" EP

Four tracks of punched-in-speaker-10-beers-down rock 'n' roll. What a fuckin' Sunday screams for. Europe rocks—to hell with the good ol' US of A, you've been relegated. Super chunky, super distorted balls-to-the-wall, wailing guitar garage punk. If you've been digging the ULCERS, REAL LOSERS and all the other primal knuckle-dragging from across the pond, you'll be a monkey's tit to miss out on this one. (SD)
(P. Trash, Dornbushweg 10, 33649 Bielfeld, GERMANY, www.ptrashrecords.com)

THE BODY – CD

A little something for the stoners here. This is grade-A hessian obsessin' doomy fare from this New England outfit, with riffs as thick and sludgy as the resin scraped from a thousand bongs. Look to bands like BONGZILLA, ISIS, CONIFER, and NEUROSIS for points of comparison and think howled, throat-shredding, hoarse vocals, glacial tempos and lots of moody tension and release. For those into this style, this is really well done and a very promising debut from this group of low-register sub-harmonic aficionados. (EL)
(Mogano, 8 Candlewood Dr, Andover, MA 01810)

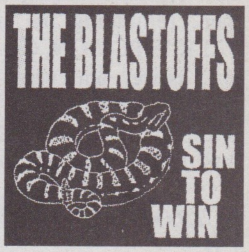
BORN/DEAD – "Repetition" 12"

There's something about BORN/DEAD that just makes me want to mosh every time I hear 'em. On this album there's a lot of the slower walking-mosh style dancing going on, or maybe the I-am-a-monster dance, and when they pick up the pace it's the full-on, room-clearing circle pit. (This is all happening in my bedroom, by the way.) Thick, brooding guitars with occasional melody lines and gaarrrrrrrghhhrowly vocals all add up to something I can't really put my finger on—it's just viscerally satisfying punk rock. The lyrics are basic but thoughtful (and of course angry), and I think kids who are new to punk would get a good introduction to anarcho-punk politics with this band. (PC)
(Prank)

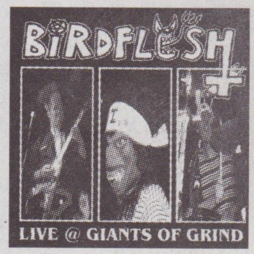
BRUTAL KNIGHTS – "Not Fun" EP

I recently saw BRUTAL KNIGHTS live and thought they were amazing—basic rock 'n' roll-influenced punk, but played with a swagger and an intensity that didn't seem to fit with their light-hearted demeanor. This three-song EP is good, but it doesn't quite capture the pleasure of seeing them live. They're recording for an upcoming LP, which will hopefully catch them at their best. I had hoped this would blow me away, but instead it's just above-average garage punk. (AM)
(Deranged, 1166 Chaster Rd, Gibsons, BC V0N 1V4, CANADA, www.derangedrecords.com)

AVERSION
WHERE MAN FEAR TO TREAD



WALL OF WORLD IS WORDS



BLOWCHUNKS
Hey Stupid!

BRUTAL KNIGHTS
NOT FUN EP

BUMBKLÄÄTT – "Ciegos" 10"

Dark and gritty hardcore from this cross-border Tijuana/San Diego band, which features members who live in both countries. They make good use of multiple vocalists including one low death-growler who gives the guy from MONSTER X a serious run for his money. Lyrics in English and Spanish spin bleak tales of mental anguish and humanity's ills. The riffs stay moderately fast mostly but speed up to match the occasional blast beat or single-note Scandinavian-style solo every now and then, reminding me of maybe a darker TALK IS POISON. Great stuff with undeniable power and conviction behind every word and note. (EL)

(Despotic, PO Box 832, Long Beach, CA 90801, www.despotic-records.tk)

BUZZOV•EN – "Welcome to Violence" CD

Apart from a few tracks on compilations over the years, I wasn't very familiar with BUZZOV•EN. I have never really been a fan of super heavy, sludgy stuff. This is a reissue of some of their earliest recordings. It's heavy like NEUROSIS meets later BLACK FLAG meets a grimy version of HELMET or something, and the vocals are dripping with negativity. I think these guys were probably ahead of their time, and the liner notes describe a live show that I wish I'd seen. The various liner notes from luminaries like Jeff Clayton of ANTISEEN, Jello Biafra, John Yates, and others also detail a pretty typical story of violence and drug abuse as the downfall of yet another band. Luckily, this story seems to have something of a happy ending, with main man Kirk now off the smack and knocking out acoustic ditties instead. If you like heavy, downer music you will like this, I can pretty much guarantee. (AM)

(Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141)

CAPTAIN SENSIBLE AND KING — "My Baby Don't Care" 10"

Recorded back in '78 at one of the many late, great John Peel sessions. I've never been a massive fan of Captain Sensible, finding him to be a bit of an unfunny wanker. Nevertheless, three tracks on this 10" had me rocking the rock. Very TELEVISION, part MAGAZINE, a touch of GARY NUMAN with a spoonful of ROBIN HITCHCOCK. Apart from the opener sucking the length, I'm digging it. (SD)

(Kray Collision)

CAREER SUICIDE – "Invisible Eyes" 12" EP

... ... I was so stoned when I began reviewing this record that I listed to the whole thing on the wrong speed... ... 33 instead of 45... and I think I like it on 33 *better*!!! On 45 CAREER SUICIDE, from Canada, sounds like contemporary thrash-o-matic punk rock played at a thousand miles an hour... ...flick the switch to 33 and you got yourself some really mean and dirty sounding early eighties oi... ... ...sorta like IRON CROSS on quaaludes... ... !!!!! You have an option with this one... ...it's kinda like getting two records in one!!!!! The one song that does my dong in on this five-songer is "Bored Bored Bored" which is fucking amazing... !!!! I'll eat your belly-button lint if you sniff my dick cheese!!! (SW)

(Feral Ward, www.feralward.com)

CAREER SUICIDE – "Invisible Eyes" 12"

The first song on this 12" sounds a little bit different than this band's other stuff. Their basic *Boston Not LA* vibe is still firmly in tact, but the song seems a bit longer and more varied than their previous work, but just a *bit*. Anyway, I hope that doesn't sound like this band is "maturing" in a way the punks can't get behind—CAREER SUICIDE has been and continues to be one of the premier bands in the world, blurring the line between hardcore and punk in a way that I cannot give a higher endorsement to. Overall, this five-song 12" continues in the same trajectory as they have been on for the past few years. The best parts about this record are that it's a 12" EP—a highly underrated format—and the song "Bored Bored Bored," which is an insanely catchy mid-tempo anthem. I will say, however, that at this point they have released so much stuff (an LP, a split LP, three EPs, and now this 12") that this 12" might get the shaft when I get the urge to listen to CAREER SUICIDE. It's not quite as good as the LP or earlier EPs. A more than excellent record from a band that can do no wrong, but has been just a bit more right in the past. (GN)

(Feral Ward, www.feralward.com)

CATALYST / CALM MURDER – "Two Sides of the Suicide King" split CD

I don't ever need to listen to this again. CATALYST is wretchedly generic open-E mosh-core with the worst vocals imaginable. Unless you imagine terrible shouting with clean vocals interspersed, in which case you'd be thinking of CALM MURDER. How convenient to have them both on one CD. It's almost like recycling when I throw this away. (EL)

(Engineering, 1 Chandos Rd, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 2NY, UNITED KINGDOM, www.engineerrecords.com)

CATHOLIC BOYS – "Actin' Stupid" EP

Assuming the hungry masses haven't already stuffed themselves on Soulseek (for shame!), here are four more killers from one of the elite *actual punk rock* bands currently inhabiting our doomed planet. If you aren't already in the know, Wisconsin's CATHOLIC BOYS offer a duel-guitar swordfight variant to the tried and true speedy snot-punk approach, sounding much more manic than the majority of their peers. The four tunes featured here stand up to anything on their much-loved debut LP, but the famed Memphis duo responsible for the production let their influence shine throughout. Naturally, you'll have to work to score this limited European import, packaged with the (now traditional) brightly colored dot-matrix-on-acid sleeve motif. Shit this good doesn't come easy… (MC)

(No Fuckin' Chance, www.nofuckinchancerecords.nl)

CHAMPION – "Promises Kept" LP

This record surprised the hell out of me. A lot of what kept me from really getting into older CHAMPION material was the fact that they leaned too heavily on the BANE formula. On *Promises Kept*, CHAMPION introduces a more stripped-down, bare-bones approach to their song writing that reminds me more of CHAIN OF STRENGTH than anything else. Fans of the last 7" need not worry, however, because they still pour on the guitar octaves, the CARRY ON-styled chord progressions, and the epic scream-along breakdowns. The key word here is balance, and CHAMPION has certainly found it with this record. This is without a doubt the best full-length to come out by a straight edge band since *A Life Less Plagued.* (CC)

(Bridge 9, PO Box 990052, Boston, MA 02199-0052)

CHEFDENKER – "Eine von Hundert Mikrowellen" CD

These Germans start off sorta street punk with ska bits, but halfway through the CD they've mastered indie, pop, and soundtrack music. They are quite musically accomplished, but they need to edit out some of the crap for my taste. Way too many sappy intros and acoustic parts. The song that sounds like a cross between ASIA, LED ZEPPELIN, and FLEETWOOD MAC proves that these guys are way too eclectic for me. Try to enjoy it... if you dare. (HM)

(Trash 2001, PO Box 10 16 53, D-46216 Bottrop, GERMANY, www.trash2001.de, www.chefdenker.de)

CHINESE TELEPHONES – "I Think I Can Breath Now" EP

Milwaukee's CHINESE TELEPHONES play anthemic, powerful pop-core. The tunes are super melodic, but the lo-fi production (or is it just a shitty mastering job?) keeps this from being too slick and sappy. I hear hints of DESCENDENTS and JAWBREAKER in here—very 90s sounding. (Another reviewer might compare them to CRIMPSHRINE, as they often do with this kind of music, but I'm sure not gonna.) I get the feeling this band totally rocks in a sing-along kinda way live. Third great release in a row from Dingus. (PC)

(Dingus, 2407 N. Pierce St, Milwaukee, WI 53212, chinesetelephones.net)

CLUSTERFUCK – "Midlife Crisis" EP

Excellent 13-song debut 7" by a Connecticut hardcore band made up of three old Nutmeg State scenesters and one youngblood. Much like the legendary 76% UNCERTAIN, CLUSTERFUCK incorporates catchy, off-kilter riffs and tempo changes into their straightforward hardcore attack. The songwriting is strong, the lyrics are bitterly sarcastic, and the vocalist has a unique delivery somewhat reminiscent of Jello, Ping Pong (SHOWCASE SHOWDOWN), and the guy from the YOUNG WASTENERS. I find the refrain "Humans disappoint me... every single fucking day" echoing through my brain long after the needle has left the vinyl. Well worth seeking out! (CS)

($4.50 ppd: Wintermute, 38 Wall St, Valhalla, NY 10595)

COMBAT WOUNDED VETERAN – "This Is Not an Erect, All-Red Neon Body" CD

The early days of this infamous group of Floridian noise-mongers are given the singles & rarities compilation treatment. Here your ears are thumped, thwacked, trounced, pummeled, punched, and punished with 42 songs recorded between '96 and '98. Included are tracks from: the *11 Song* 7", the *What Flavor is Your Death Squad Leader?* 7", splits with ORCHID and SCROTUM GRINDER, some unreleased stuff and enough comp tracks to fill a CD (err…I mean…). As for how it sounds... this is fairly incomprehensible noise grind—if you can discern a single distinct note or lyric over the steaming piles of feedback and blasting and screaming, you're doing better than me. But that's precisely the point, so if you're feeling so inclined, look no further for total aural destruction. (EL)

(No Idea, www.noidearecords.com)

THE CONTRARY – "Corroded Culture" EP

Fuck yes! This LP is fast, manic punk that challenges you on many levels! The music roils and bubbles up, threatening to suck you under unless you stand up for what you believe in! The CONTRARY attacks organized religion, corporate greed, sadistic cops, ineffectual liberal politics, and the young soldiers who were brainwashed into believing they are fighting for a just cause only to come home and receive no respect from the American population. The high quality punk music on this disc carries these thought provoking lyrics to the logical conclusion: punk rock bands are supposed to write songs about important issues in life. This is solid LP propelled by a healthy combination of great guitar work and strong vocals. Almost every song holds your attention all the way through (a difficult feat on an LP containing sixteen songs). (BR)

(Welfare, PO Box 35573, Brighton, MA 02135, www.welfarerecords.net)

CRASS – "1979 John Peel Sessions" EP

I am not at all sure about the legitimacy of this release. It is on "Crass Records" and has matrix numbers, but it could just as easily be a boot. A boot of this recording has circulated as an EP already, but I don't know if this copy is a re-booting of that record or an attempt by the band to take control of the recording. If nothing else, I hope that this record is more available because the first round of this bootleg was selling on eBay for an arm and a leg thanks to scum bootlegger. But I digress. If my memory serves me correctly, these Peel sessions were only the second time that CRASS ever entered a studio, and the recording captures the band at its most straightforward and angry. I know that there are people who dis CRASS for being less a band to listen to and more a band to read about, appreciate from afar, or make fun of outright, but I am not one of those people. As far as I'm concerned, the early UK anarcho scene was one of punk's most exciting in terms of music, aesthetics, and politics. Crass Records put out some of my favorites from the early UK DIY era—HONEY BANE, RUDIMENTARY PENI, OMEGA TRIBE, ZOUNDS, the MOB, and of course CRASS themselves—and those old CRASS LPs still get regular play around these parts. For the few uninitiated, CRASS' music featured heavily-accented Brits ranting over abrasive, aggressive punk. The songs are so jagged at times that they even seem in some places like post-punk. Some may not think so, but it is my contention that CRASS had a sense of humor as well. This EP features five songs including classics like " Shaved Women" and "Mother Earth," though the recording lacks some of the ferocity of the LP versions of these tracks. The quality of the artwork is a little less arresting than most CRASS stuff as well, which is part of what leads me to believe this is (still) a boot. Altogether, this is not the best place to start for the newcomers (my favorite of their records is *Penis Envy*), but a nice addition to a fan's collection. (GN)

(no address)

CZOLGOSZ / OPUS DEAD – split EP

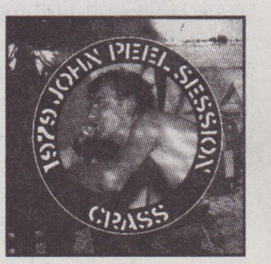
CZOLGOSZ are happy sounding pogo-punk from Boston, MA. They have a CD on Rodent Popsicle and that is about all I know about them. I don't want to be that reviewer, but this just isn't my thing. I am sure that any fan of them already will dig this; it's recorded nicely and sounds good for what it is. OPUS DEAD from Spain sound more like a straightforward hardcore band, although I can't really say I like them either. They have a good sounding recording as well, but nothing grabs me. The last song of OPUS DEAD

Casket life

THE CHARMING SNAKES

CHINESE TELEPHONES

CLUSTERFUCK
MIDLIFE CRIS



"Evolucion" is pretty good though. A ton of labels put in to release this record, and I am sure it will be more appreciated by others. (WK)

(Victim, Apdo. 24037, 28080 Madrid, SPAIN, victimrecords@yahoo.es)

CRISIS – "The Guilty Have a Past" LP

With enough crap bootlegs of shitty no mark bands to sink a small nation, it's about time someone booted CRISIS. Criminally underrated (even to this day), the band put out a small handful of 7"s and a 12" between '77-'80 before mutating into death rockers DEATH IN JUNE. Never fear, punkers, there's no dreary goth nonsense here—this gear hits a ten on the punk-o-meter. It's hard to pinpoint CRISIS' sound; they maybe fall somewhere between the RUTS'/STRAPS' more punk stuff and the darker anarcho sounds of the MOB and ZOUNDS with smart anti-state lyrics. Comprising all of the single tracks and some fantastic demo recordings, this is a must-buy. Whilst the quality isn't perfect, it isn't half bad (even the demo tracks). Fantastic. (TB)

(no address)

DAN MELCHIOR – "The Covert Stomp 1992-2003, Featuring Bruno Meyrick Jones" LP

A collection of live recordings and radio performances with and without the BROKE REVUE. MELCHIOR is a great vocalist and songwriter, but I prefer it when he has a full band. The man needs to rock out, damn it. This collection is mostly acoustic songs recorded prior to the release of their two amazing In The Red records. They are fun and interesting, but when you know where they will be going you can't wait for them to get there. (CK)

(Hate, Via S. Giovanni In Laterano 192/194, 00184 Roma, ITALY, haters@tiscalinet.it)

DEAN DIRG / HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE – split EP

Well, Hell has frozen over, pigs are flying, and Sean Dougan is wearing a Glasgow Rangers jersey. I have a split here where HFOS gets blown away by the band on the other side. Yup, DEAN DIRG has given us four tracks of pure trashy punk beauty that just wipes out the three tracks that HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE gives us. Not that the HFOS tracks are bad—in fact they are quite good, if not a little bit more poppy than usual. Sometimes you just run into a band that on a particular day rocks a little harder then you, and on this day the winner is DEAN DIRG. (JF)

(Green Hell)

DEMON CITY WRECKERS – "Inner Demons" CD

Ten tracks of US psychobilly. What exactly constitutes psychobilly (the demon child of rockabilly and punk) has baffled most folks for the last 25 years. This new offering won't shed much more light. I guess it sounds like a rather strained miscegenation of the CRAMPS and MISFITS. Best thing about the record is the bits of dialogue from *Kingpin* and *The Big Lebowski* scattered throughout. There is an upright bass, and all the dudes in the band appear to be burly and have lots of tattoos. (RK)

(Hairball 8, www.hairball8.com)

DFA / UNDER PRESSURE – split EP

A split effort from these two bands, both of which have other records under their belts. Canada's DFA turns in three tracks of what is now their trademark crossover/thrash sound. They thank MUNICIPAL WASTE, DAMAGE DEPOSIT, and CRUCIAL UNIT in their liners, which I think is a good mark of both their sound and lyrical approach. That is to say, they play fast hardcore and feature goofy guitar riffery and lyrics (though they never get quite as ridiculous as the aforementioned bands). UNDER PRESSURE has a burlier hardcore approach. Think *Feel The Darkness*-era POISON IDEA with production that suffers from being a little too thin. There are also chunky guitar breaks here and there, which take away from their rockin' hardcore momentum. Overall, I strongly preferred the UNDER PRESSURE side to this record, not only for the music but also because I can relate more to their negative lyrics than I could to DFA's songs about pot and ping-pong. (GN)

(Flowerviolence, Kapellenstrasse 16, 69469, Weinheim, GERMANY)

DIGGER & THE PUSSYCATS – "Card Shark Annie" EP

At first, I thought this had sort of an X feel to it. I took a quick peek at the pic sleeve and notice an email address that has "australianrecords" in it and then it all becomes crystal clear. This is unmistakably Australian and it fucking rocks. This is a throwback; it's catchy, it's melodic, it's punk rock. It is not power pop or even pop punk. It's poppy, to be sure, but it is not pop. Most of all, it's got an urgency that makes it compelling. Since it's limited to 500 copies, I suggest you get your ass in gear. (KK)

(P. Trash, www.ptrashrecords.com)

THE DIRTY FINGERS – "Name of the Game Is... Cocaine!!" EP

The DIRTY FINGERS epitomize sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll. They have great production with a full, distorted, Gibson/Marshall mid-tempo SUPERSUCKERS/CANDY SNATCHERS style rock 'n' roll; songs like "Girl to Fuck," "She's a Slut" and the title track take care of the sex and drugs. I gotta say their tongue-in-cheek chauvinism oughtta win a lotta feminist friends, and attract the attention-starved ladies. (HM)

(Big Neck, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195, www.fandangorecs.com/dirtyfingers)

DISSECT / LOS REZIOS – split EP

Peru's LOS REZIOS brings the world well-done, gritty hardcore crust punk. It's not too tight but that is what I like so much about it, though I could do without all the reverb on the vocals. On the flip we have DISSECT from Finland, who plays straight-up crust with multiple vocalists. I am into the heavy bass sound on this recording. The second track is pretty fucking driving—good split. (MS)

(Power It Up, mailorder@power-it-up.de)

DISSYSTEMA – "The Grim Prospects of Our Future" LP

I have yet to hear a bad Putrid Filth record. What I mean is that there is a certain consistency with their releases, and this one is no different. DISSYSTEMA pounds out eleven D-beat anthems that are reminiscent of DISFEAR and DISCHANGE at times along with a slew of other Swedish bands that forged the way and developed this sound. There are three vocalists to break up any monotony and the record remains fast paced and interesting throughout. I caught these guys live a couple weeks ago and they put on a hell of a show. The standout songs for me were "Ghosts of War Arise" which I remember well from seeing them, and "Hope." Here and there are some hints of metal, but done in good taste. Overall the sound remains charging and raw. Some solid artwork by Marald graces the cover as well. Recommended. (WK)

(Putrid Filth Conspiracy,
www.putridfilth.com)

THE EARACHES – "Get the Revolution Out of Your Head" CD

Straight-up 60s-inspired garage punk, done right and stinking of that trashy Tim Kerr production. Enough punk rock to keep it driven and enough R 'n' B to keep me dancing. Very RIVER CITY GAMBLERS mixing it up with the SAINTS, a hint of MC5, and of course a big nod to all those

scuzzy 60s no marks. Loud, obnoxious, primitive, and sloppy, just the way I like it. (SD)
(Steel Cage, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125, www.steelcagerecords.com)

EASTERN STAR – "Get Ready to Ride Hard" CD

Czech rock 'n' rollers attempt to kick out the jams, *a la* SUPERSUCKERS. They probably wish they were currently Swedish, and come across as a less bombastic TURBONEGRO, minus the sense of humor—great tunes, and pure rock. Merely naming one of your songs "Prague Rock City" doesn't cut it. (RK)
(Bulldog Music & Streetwear, www.streetpunk.cz)

EPOXIES – "Stop the Future" CD

Another strong release from this punky new wave band from Portland. Right out of the school of UK new wave circa 1980, this popular band seems to be on a roll. Although I could go for more of a mix pace wise, this band is one of the best at this stuff both live and on record. (RL)
(Fat Wreck, www.theepoxies.com)

THE ESCAPED – "Get Away" CD

This Portland band mixes it up with six songs of rock solid hardcore with an edgy street punk feel to it. (Bruce Roehrs fans take note.) Solid production all around combined with the two throaty vocalists pitching in their talents make for another quality release from… (RC)
(TKO, 8941 Atlanta Ave, #505, Huntington Beach, CA 92646, tkorecords.com)

FLIGHT OF THE JESUS DOG – CD

Another entry for the small but rabid followers of all things tech-metal from this Wisconsin/Michigan group. This is just relentless guitar pyrotechnics with a manic dual high/low vocal assault overtop non-stop drum machine mayhem. I have to say the drum machine bums me out cuz, well, drummers rule, but still the guitars and vocals more than stand on their own with some serious PIG DESTROYER meets CREATION IS CRUCIFIXION style brutality. Really the guitar work here is just over the top—super heavy, catchy, and just one insanely fast riff after another. If these guys manage to find themselves a drummer who can keep up with them, they'll be a force to be reckoned with. (EL)
(Saw Her Ghost, PO Box 3654, Ann Arbor, MI 48106, www.sawherghost.com)

FREEDUMB – "The Freedumb X Pedition" EP

These days I get excited when I see a return address with the country Norway listed. FREEDUMB is from Oslo and has a classic Scandanavian feel going on, with perhaps a dose of UK peace punk. While nowhere as good as NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS or GORILLA ANGREB, they are another solid argument that Scandinavia still has it going on. (JF)
(Antirock, c/o Runerd Rudberg, P.B. 34, Valerenga, 0626 Oslo, NORWAY, antirock@hotmail.com)

GEIN AND THE GRAVE ROBBERS – "The Passion of the Anti-Christ" CD

This is some eerie friggin' instrumental surf music. GEIN AND THE GRAVE ROBBERS creates first-rate surf music with plenty of hooks and masterful lead guitar. Was there any doubt that there are thirteen tracks? Good shit. (HM)
(Necro-tone, www.necro-tonerecords.com, www.geinandthegraverobbers.com)

THE GIMMES – "Phonic Souls" CD

Japanese band, American label. Fast, heavy and overmodulated: my hearing's already damaged, and the GIMMES aren't helping. Fantastic stuff if you're looking for a TEENGENERATE or REGISTRATORS-type fix, with some additional Rock Dude Camaro-swerving mystery action. Swell. (JH)
(Dionysus, PO Box 1975, Burbank, CA, 91507, www.dionysusrecords.com)

GORILLA ANGREB – "Aborted 2000" EP

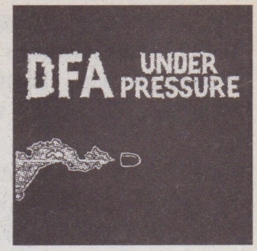
Here we have the newest release by GORILLA ANGREB from Denmark, which was originally recorded in 2000. Though they didn't release it then, they decided to release it for their US tour, which was a lot of fun to see. This is really excellent, timeless punk! Mai's vocals are rawer than their other releases, which provides us with an overall nastier, grittier sound. This is the kind of punk people need to dance to, and I am not talking circle-pit shit, I mean dance!!! This is fucking punk!!! Great stuff! (MS)
(Feral Ward, www.feralward.com)

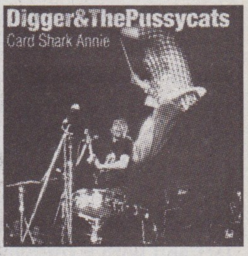
GREY GOOSE – "'Til the Medicine Takes" CD

GREY GOOSE sounds like LEATHERFACE... oh that's a surprise, they're from Gainesville. Do people in Gainesville have nothing better to do than sit on their porches and listen to LEATHERFACE and UNCLE TUPELO all day??? The answer of course is yes—sometimes they listen to JAWBREAKER too. (I've never actually been to Gainesville—the closest I've ever gotten to Florida is Chicago—I'm just surmising from the records that come from there.) Very good mid-tempo, melodic punk with heaps of emotion and a little alt-country feel here-and-there. If you liked UNITAS you should go out and get this. Featuring members of (wait for it...) RADON and the CRO(W)S, this is well played, well written, and has a nice mood to it. The bloke from HOT WATER MUSIC did a nice job twiddling his knob behind the mixing desk. (AD)
(Sounds of Subterrania! PO 103662, D-34036 Kassel, GERMANY)

GRITOS DE ALERTA / SICK TERROR – split 7"

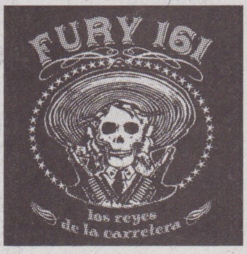
A pairing of blistering hardcore/grind from Brazil, with both bands singing in Portuguese. GRITOS DE ALERTA is straight ahead thrashy hardcore/power violence with potent lyrics and a good amount of energy. Decent stuff, but not too noteworthy. SICK TERROR is far better to these ears, playing a much more frenzied, chaotic, and varied blend of





DIRTY FINGERS
NAME OF THE GAME IS.... COCAINE!!

FREEDUMB
the freedumb x pedition


FURY 161
los reyes de la carretera

Aborted 2000 EP
GORILLA
ANGREB

hardcore and grind. Plenty of tempo shifts and hoarse, screamed vocals complement the hammering drums and guitar work. Worth it for these guys alone. (EL)
(Power it Up, Postfach 1114, 38156 Vechelde, GERMANY, www.power-it-up.de)

HARPOON GUNS – "Harpoon Guns" EP

HARPOON GUNS crams ten raw 'n' speedy hardcore tunes onto this 7", treading the fine line between wild thrash and demo-quality noise. Think the modern-day equivalent of a Mystic Records EP. Production values were evidently not a priority here, but fortunately the band's energy and drive just about make up for it. While some of the songs on here kinda blend together, there are a few real standouts that I dig ("Shellshock" and "No Punks" in particular) and with a little more development and quality control this band could release a killer follow-up. (CS)
(Snack Attack, 15120 Suite #105 Bonavista St, Sante Fe Springs, CA 90670, www.snackattackrecords.com)

HAYMAKER – "Lost Tribe 30-11-04" EP

Intense and uncompromising are the first two words that come to mind when I hear this. HAYMAKER is a fast and ferocious hardcore punk band from Canada with tough as nail vocals and great "fuck you" lyrics. I especially enjoyed the lyrics to "Please Give Us A Good Review." I keep hearing a rumor that they are going to play on the West Coast this summer, and after hearing how great they are live, I am really looking forward to seeing them. That is, if they can actually make it through US customs. (RC)
(Deranged)

HIGH SCHOOL SWEETHEARTS – "Heels 'n' Wheels" CD

More of that self-unconscious rock 'n' roll that packs stadiums and sock-hops: it's very slick and slightly-precious pop and rock with its roots in the DEL SHANNON-meets-MODERN LOVERS school (pun). I don't remember high school feeling (or sounding) like this—not a lot of venom or aggro to be found in *Heels 'n' Wheels.* Detention for all. (JH)
(Get Hip, PO Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317, www.gethip.com)

HIGH TENSION WIRE – "Send a Message" CD

A typically high-quality release from Dirtnap. Melodic, fast-paced, garage punk. It's got distorted vocals throughout, which are overdone but work well anyway. The tunes are tight and catchy, and fans of bands like THE KNOCKOUT PILLS or THE MARKED MEN should not be disappointed. (PC)
(Dirtnap, PO Box 21249, Seattle, WA 98111, www.dirtnaprecs.com)

HO-AG/ LAUGHING LIGHT – split EP

HO-AG turns in a track of loose, disjointed, noisy punk. They remind me of some of the bands that roamed the cultural wasteland that was the mid 80s. LAUGHING LIGHT is more of the same, though even more broken and discordant. Both of these bands could have been on Shimmy Disc back in the day. Is this what they call *"art damage?"* I don't know. It's not really my cup of tea, but it's a change from the legions of street punk, pop-punk wannabes, and half-assed emo bands that proliferate the bins here at *MRR* HQ these days. (AD)
(Mister, 199 South St. #5, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130)

THE HORDE – "Join or Die" CD

This eight-song CD includes four songs from the HORDE 7" and a MISFITS cover not included in the eight aforementioned songs. Because fuck…a by-the-book MISFITS cover may be a crowd-pleaser at the high school ice cream social or battle of the bands, but for everyone listening at home it's just a miserable reminder of the current, increasingly pathetic state of hardcore music. Musically, MISFITS cover aside, this comes off a bit like CUT THE SHIT, although not as rough and tumble, and differing further with lyrics that deal with the tough issues like: take me seriously, "I mean business," that sort of thing. I realize that some of these songs are older, and that maybe there are new songs in the works that will knock socks off. But, pertaining to the disc at hand, no loyal hardcore purist will handle hearing another band borrow riffs from the sacred book of US hardcore riffage without first giving the proscribed, mandatory, and identifiable offering of misery, blood, and charisma necessary to differentiate. Do you want to hear another chorus this decade stating "we are the kids" that's not a cover of IN/HUMANITY? Fuck no! (BS)
(1234 Go!, www.1234gorecords.com)

HUMAN TANGA – "A Ritual Sacrifice to the Big Nothing" CD

If you like your music loud, fast, and weird you will like HUMAN TANGA. They come from Italy and play strange, dark, noisy music with a lot of diabolic imagery. For example, pornographic pictures with the women's heads replaced by skulls... cool!!! BUTTHOLE SURFERS, WHITE ZOMBIE, and GWAR all spring to mind. Evil! (AD)
(www.nicotinerecords.com)

INDIAN JEWELRY – "In Love With Loving" EP

The topside of this mutha is pure SUICIDE worship, nothing more or less. Rather than say, "just listen to SUICIDE" I will extend the reviewer's paw across the decades and offer a hand up to musician and listener alike; let's progress together. And so as to justify my faith, the flipside tracks are, well, post-SUICIDE. They come off sounding like the proto-industrial stuff that lurks on lots of those mega-$$ comps that infest record store walls in Stockholm and London, post-punk without the dance beat...ohhhhh no, there's no dancing on this, unless you count heavy-lidded mopery and caffeine jitters as social movement. To be honest, although I pretty much dig the MINIMAL MAN-type trip these icy-stare mongoloids are practicing, this was type of record that Tim Yo purged from the collection back in the mid-90s, for better or for worse. Worse. (RW)
(www.swarmofangels.com)

INTERFUSE – "Closed Doors Open Tracks" CD

I was ready to write off INTERFUSE as ex-punks or hipsters, but something in their jagged, dissonant, and abrasive music kept me listening. They may be ex-punks (practically a criminal offense around these parts) or hipsters—who knows—but they have put forth a compelling CD album worth of mid-tempo, guitar-led rock 'n' roll that calls to mind some of the more interesting indie/punk of the mid-90s. That is to say, the guitar parts have a harsh quality to them, the music is just a bit too slow, and the male and female vocals are shout-spoken. They steer pretty clear of discernable hooks, which keeps this from being a more enjoyable listen, but overall I would say that INTERFUSE's quirkiness keeps them from being just another indie rock band. (GN)
(Tragic End, PO Box 30248, Middleburg Hts, OH 44130)

IRRITATE – "Driven" EP

Extra-low Cookie Monster vocals dominate this EP, which sounds like a 45 played on 33. They're basically adding a new twist to grindcore by playing much slower. This brings the pace down to a level where I am more comfortable with it, but that's probably a bad sign for true fans of the genre. The fact that they cover LÄRM and BATHORY might

tell you something (or maybe not). I like some of their riffs but in general it's not all that exciting, and the recording is more demo than record quality. The high point is three of the songs' lyrics, which deal with society being fucked up, getting hella wasted, and rocking out, respectively. (PC)
(Agromosh, ben_agromosh@yahoo.com)

JAPANTHER – "Wolfenswan" CD

Maxed out lo-fi techno here. Lots of noise, drum machines, keyboards, and jagged guitar lines. Maybe a pretty song or two also. Raw yet swirly stuff that ends up sounding like JOY DIVISION with a dash of SIGUR ROS and a bit of LE TIGRE. Tough to pinpoint, but good. (RL)
(Plan-It-X, www.plan-it-x.com)

JUMP BOYS – "Bondage Baby / Build a City"

This sounds old… so old it could be from Long Beach. Even the A-side song title sounds old—I mean who the hell sings about bondage these days? Saying that, they do the '77 throwback thing pretty well. Think the STITCHES and US BOMBS and you're in the right 'hood. I was hoping that the flipside was going to be a homage to STARSHIP's "We Built this City on Rock 'n' Roll," but alas, that is not the case. Good shit; punk rock. (AD)
(Rat Face, 1408 10th Ave. W #2, Seattle, WA 98119)

KAUNIIT POLIITSIT – "Vahingonlaukas" LP

This is the first full-length from this Finnish band, which has also released an EP and a split EP of material. There are some really fun pogo punk tracks on here that remind me of mid-90s New York (think the *Pogo Attack* LP), but with a Finnish flavor that can't help but bring the classics of Finnish punk to mind. I was about to reference LAMA, but in honesty this band does not deserve such a lofty comparison despite belonging distinctly to the tradition that that band ushered in. There is a lot of random filler on this LP, and it would probably be more of a sleeper hit if it were a bit less long. Nonetheless, these kids look punk as fuck, and are obviously having a lot of fun being out of order (as their "zany" photographs will attest to). While I am not about to run out and get a KAUNIIT POLIITSIT tattoo or anything, I will definitely have an eye out for future releases. (GN)
(Höhnie, c/o Andreas Höhn, An Der Kuhrändke 7, 31535 Neustadt, GERMANY)

KGB – "Fiesta Fiasko" CD

I'm not gonna bullshit ya, knowledge of the German language is not my strong point. So I can't really say much about the details of this CD/DVD. This seems to be a new CD material wise with a DVD collection tossed in, although the DVD didn't play on my regional player. Formed in 1988, this is tuneful stuff (sung in German) from a band that reminds me of the NEWTOWN NEUROTICS or the punk sound of, let's say, RED ALERT. Decent enough. (RL)
(ZYX, www.zyxmusic.com)

THE KNOX – "Smash This EP" EP

I'm all over the recent crop of spiky haired youngsters mining the old sounds of my youth (UK gluebag punks of the early 80s). If it's done right it fucking rips: CROPKNOX, EPIDEMIC, COMPLETE CONTROL, CLIT 45 etc. This band is trying their best and are almost there, but the vocals kinda suck, the musicianship is a little ragged, and they do a fucking BODYCOUNT cover! That's an immediate red card, early shower, and potential season ban. This should have been a demo. (TB)
(Welfare, PO Box 35573 Brighton, MA 02135, www.welfarerecords.net)

THE KNOX – "System/System" LP

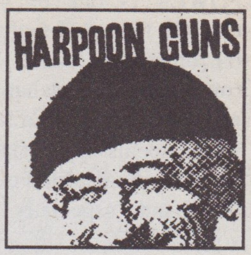
Profoundly mediocre UK82-style punk that would have benefited quite a bit from some more time spent working out catchier songs, and a better recording. It sucks to say that over and over about bands, but it's true—there is no reason to rush out a vinyl release if it's going to put people off from giving your band a chance because of inferior sound quality. I can believe that this band is going to get better—and when they do fans of early DEFIANCE should take note—but in the meantime I would advise all those but fanatical DIY street punk completists to pass on this offering. I should note that the stronger release between this LP and their EP (also reviewed this issue) is definitely this LP, as it features some nifty guitar playing and a better recording, though it doesn't help it also features some of the ugliest, blurriest cover art I've seen in a while. Back to the drawing board, guys. (GN)
(Welfare, PO Box 35573, Brighton, MA 02135, www.welfarerecords.net)

KNUGEN FALLER – "Inte Som Ni" EP

Yeah, yeah, yeah! Okay, here's the new KNUGEN FALLER 7", let's see if those perfect girl-punk vocals can mix it up with the scratchy-catchy git-tars to achieve that sonic skin tingle the first EP pulled off in spades. Jury says: half 'n' half, which just means that it's half of one of the best 7"s of the year, and half of one of the best 7"s of the month (merely). This band is still bursting with ideas, and they are mining a sound that no other band is currrently exploring with success outside of GORILLA ANGREB; the early 80s pre-hardcore Euro punk sound *after* all the mags of the day declared "punk is dead," basically after 1978. We all know punk is undead, so "Hail the New Zombies!" I am waiting more eagerly for an LP from this group than any other band of the moment. Well, unless the rumor mill is right about the RAYDIOS actually trying to get back together... (RW)
(Wasted Sounds, Skolgatan 110, 90332 Umea, SWEDEN)

KOBRAXI / SIKA – split EP

Eastern European hardcore anyone? KOBRAXIS plays raw and aggressive punk that has a basic demo quality sound that actually lends to the catchiness of it. They do a pretty bad cover of a RAW POWER



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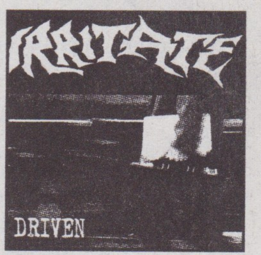
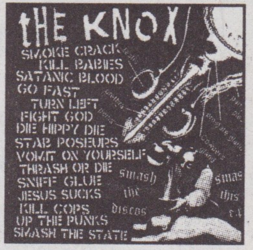




KNUGEN FALLER
Inte Som Ni

song, which is always annoying since RAW POWER is one of my favorite bands. Overall, though, I really enjoyed them. On the other side, SIKA blows through five songs of aggressive hardcore with a definite metal feel. They do a MONSTER X cover, which seems appropriate since their harsh and heavily distorted output reminds me of that band, especially those overly gruff vocals. (RC)
(Wasted Sounds; wastedsounds.com)

KOFFIN KATS – "Inhumane" CD

I've never been much of a psychobilly fan, especially after nearly getting my head knocked off at the Klub Foot watching the METEORS. This CD is pretty good though, if a little odd; it sounds like Glen Danzig fronting a punk tinged psychobilly band with Dick Dale on guitar, singing songs about graveyards and vampires! If I had a big quiff, dodgy tats, and a chopped hotrod I'd be all over this. (TB)
(www.hairball8.com)

KUNG FU MONKEYS – "Coast to Coast" EP

One of the Mutant Pop bands from yesteryear, these folks do HI-FIVES styled pop with a dash of surf. Hanging in there, it's nothing new but still a fun time. (RL)
(Swimmingly, topsyturvey@att.net)

THE LITIGATORS – "Let Me Cross Over / Wild Me" 45

More 60s than punk; more boring than rocking. The LITIGATORS sort of remind me of the 60s cover band in the movie *The Commitments* Really, this review is about as inspired as this 45. (JF)
(Wrath and Wroll, PO Box 33355, Kansas City, MO 64168)

LOOSE SKREWS – "More Than a Few" CD

I figured this band to be one of those horrible Confederacy of Scum bands, judging by facial hair and cut off denims, but I was wrong. It actually sounds like a faster, more hardcore version of those old Headache bands like the WRETCHED ONES. Y'know, burly punk rock that sounds like a slower POISON IDEA played by blokes who do hard manual labor for a living and could knock the shit out of you in a second. It's not going to be in regular rotation, but there's plenty of songs about drinking that I can raise a glass to. It's really not half bad. (TB)
(Loose Skrews, PMB# 106-82, 4290 Bells Ferry Road, Kennesaw, GA 30144)

LOS CREEPERS – "Filth" CDEP

This slick, So Cal, psychobillied-out hardcore is ready for the big time. These guys are tight, cool, and savvy. You gotta like the skulls, liquor, and flames that adorn the prison tattoo style artwork. Check 'em out at the Warped Tour or Hot Topic! (HM)
(Smelvis, PO Box 1779, Wilmington, CA 90744, www.smelvisrecords.com)

THE MAINLINERS – " Bring on the Sweetlife" CD

Unrelenting Sweden, its yield never waning; more bands than Ireland has pubs, than Leicester has curry houses. Five pretty boys turning up the racket, bashing out their take on the garage that had their folks shaking the floor way back then. Organ-driven groove, shamelessly retro, no apology needed cause I'm digging your cause. Coming of as a young Van Morrison fronting an even younger ANIMALS with the hip and sway of the CUTS. (SD)
(Get Hip, PO Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317, www.gethip.com)

MARTIAL LAW – "Invasion" EP

What? This is a very poor recording. I don't exactly know how a band would want to put this on vinyl. It is perfect for a demo, though. Maybe someone had an extra fifteen hundred dollars laying around and decided this would be a good way to blow it. I actually like the vocals but they are raised too high above the music. Also, it sounds like the guitar was played through one of those mini Marshall half stacks, the drums are pretty indecipherable, and the bass is above all the other instruments. That said, I could see this band maybe being really good. They play straightforward hardcore punk that is catchy and raw. I really like the song "What the Hell" which has the best recording on the EP. I hope they keep it up; I am interested to hear what they sound like in a couple years, with a better recording. (WK)
(Welfare, PO Box 35573, Brighton, MA 02135, www.welfarerecords.net)

MAYDAY – "Endless Resist" EP

When the intro started to this EP I got nervous because it's pretty bad, but once it gets going it gets better. MAYDAY has the multiple vocalist style going on, and I think they do really well with the mid-paced hardcore stuff. Unfortunately, they also have some boring blast beat shit that makes them a bit generic. They play around with metal a bit too. (MS)
(Reprocreate, PO Box 18562 Austin, TX 78760, reprocreate_records@yahoo.com)

THE MESSENGERS – CD

Good melodic punk with a gal singer. A little bit of street, a little pop punk, and a little bit of rock and roll. Sort of a mix of JOAN JETT, TILT, and early DISCOUNT. Good tunes to boot. A strong full-length from this Cincinnati band. (RL)
(Punkcore, PO Box 916, Middle Island, NY, 11953, www.themessengers.cc)

MINIBOSSES / PENNY WINBLOOD – split CD

There's a band from around here called the ADVANTAGE who does nothing but covers of vintage Nintendo tunes, and that's basically what's going on with the MINIBOSSES tracks on this CD. I got out of video games after the Atari 2600 era, but if the names Double Dragon or Castlevania mean anything to you you'll be into this stuff. PENNY WINBLOOD, on the other hand, sounds like a cross between riot grrrl and early 90s loud/quiet emo, or like HUGGY BEAR with a bit of math rock thrown in. Good stuff. (AM)
(Forge, www.forgerecords.com)

MISERY – "Production Thru Destruction" CD

It boggles the mind that MISERY has been at it for as long as they have. In the years and years they've been plugging away (since 1988, when I was six), they've helped establish Minneapolis as the American hub for smelly kids in dirty clothes playing heavily metallic, somewhat tedious political hardcore based on the mid-80s UK peace/crust model. This is a CD reissue of their first LP, which seems slightly redundant since most of this material is on their *Early Years* collection. There is an eerie reverb effect on the vocals that's more pronounced than on more recent releases, which makes this record seem even more metal than I remember. This record defined an era and sound in American hardcore (known in some circles as "apocalyptic crust") that was ushered in with bands like NAUSEA and MISERY, and is still being championed by bands like, uh, MISERY. For some, this record is an all-time classic, which makes its the ready availability particularly noteworthy. (GN)
(Crimes Against Humanity, PO Box 1421, Eau Claire, WI 54702)

MOTORPSYCHOS – "Piston Whipped" CD

If you get nostalgic for the releases that In-Effect put out in the late 80s/early 90s this one might be for you. Not as funky, though, so I guess what I am saying is that MOTORPSYCHOS remind me a lot of bands

like SCATTERBRAIN. “Piston Whipped” is one horrible bar-rock/punk crossover that would make the perfect gift for somebody who loves that GUNS ‘N’ ROSES cover record, just keep it away from any punks you know. (JF)
(Motorpsychos, PO Box 10787, Pittsburg, PA 15203)

MY COLD EMBRACE / UNCURBED – split EP

First off all, the songs on this record are already released. UNCURBED FAMILY (as they are now calling themselves) gives us two songs off of their LP *Punks on Parole*. UNCURBED’s music is great and the vocals are downright crushing, but the lyrics are laughable: “We are the punks / still marching on / we are the drunks / still party on.” Next time just leave out the insert! MY COLD EMBRACE from Germany blasts out some metallic hardcore. Not anything I’m into at all, but if you are a fan of blast beats and a bass drum that sounds like a rack tom, then this will be right up your alley. The vocals sound mean and they’re tight musically. These songs are also available on MY COLD EMBRACE’s CD *Katharsis*. (WK)
(Power It Up, www.power-it-up.de)

MY SHINING ONE / SON OF THE MOURNING – split CD

MY SHINING ONE is of the ‘“metallic hardcore with melodic emo vocals” kind. I can’t stand these kinds of bands. The vocals sometimes remind me of some bad 80s hard rock bands and the riffs border on being bad hair-metal. Their bio states that they “incorporate the influences of metal and hardcore, layered with indie rock to create a sound that blazes a new path.” I think I’ll stick to my dusty downtrodden hardcore punk road if you don’t mind. Not my thing at all. SON OF THE MOURNING is equally horrible metalcore and rips off bands like CONVERGE and 18 VISIONS. Why anyone would want to put out stuff this shitty and mediocre is beyond me. (JD)
(Engineer, 1 Chandos Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 2NY, UNITED KINGDOM)

MY SON MY EXECUTIONER – “In Between Heaven and Hell” CD

Derivative metalcore here in the IN FLAMES-worshipping Scandinavian style that’s so ever-popular these days. I really can’t stand this sub-sub-genre or understand why every band wants to sound exactly like every other. All the open-E moshing and rudimentary sweep picking in the world won’t make up for another glut of faceless clone music. (EL)
(Doll House, PO Box 898, Colleyville, TX 76034, www.dollhouseinc.com)

NEGATIVE APPROACH – “Ready to Fight” 2xLP

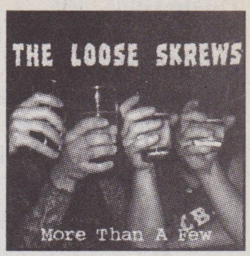
This is the long-awaited NEGATIVE APPROACH double LP that has been in the works for several years. NA, from Detroit, is today considered one of the finest bands to emerge from the early 80s American hardcore scene. Their sound was a vicious mix of BLACK FLAG’s nihilism, the speed of the early Dischord Records’ bands (MINOR THREAT, SOA), and the burly aggro of UK oi bands like the 4-SKINS. What you get on this album is two demo sessions and two live shows. The group’s first demo, from 1981, is a poorly recorded but utterly brutal affair, including four unreleased tracks and a 4-SKINS cover. The other demo predates, but features many of the songs from, their 1983 *Tied Down* LP. This recording is the real gem here—essentially a rougher, more energetic version of that LP. The live material that comprises three of the four sides of this double album is surprisingly well recorded (and head and shoulders above the garbage included on NA’s *Total Recall* discography CD) and a strong testament to the band’s legacy as a fearsome live act. Altogether, it’s an excellently assembled collection packaged in a nice gatefold sleeve with liner notes and several pictures of John Brannon looking menacing on stage. Although not suggested as an introduction to this classic band, this is otherwise a real no-brainer. Pick it up! (CS)
(Reptilian, 403 S. Broadway, Baltimore, MD 21231, www.reptilianrecords.com)

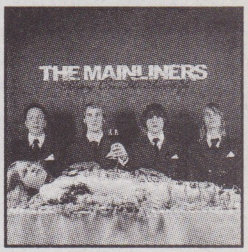
THE NICE BOYS – “You Won’t See Me Anymore / sLipstick” 45

...what a *fucking amazing single*!!!! Even though these guys look like fucking *bozos* and sport a totally lame band logo they manage to pen some *pretty impressive tunes*!!! Especially “You Won’t See Me Anymore,” which is my favorite of the two... ... talk about a perfectly written and perfectly executed pop masterpiece!!! And do keep this in mind you motherfucking readers, if there is anybody here at *MRR* qualified to make these remarks it’s *me*... ... I listen to more pussy-ass pop than the lot of ’em... ...from the RASPBERRIES to the VAPORS... ...I’ve sucked all their cocks and then some... ... consider my words like pearl white cum-balls of wisdom!!! This record is so fucking tight it makes my asshole ache... ... these kids are top-notch players, no doubt about it!!!! I’d like to see the Japanese try to top this one!!!!! Also, there was a little note tucked into the record sleeve that tips me off to the guitarist being former member of the EXPLODING HEARTS (whom I also thought was an amazing pop band)!!! Even if this is so, this record holds up on it’s own!!! I gave it five spins just to give my cock a good wetting!!! (SW)
(Discourage)

NIX – “Down the Tubes” EP

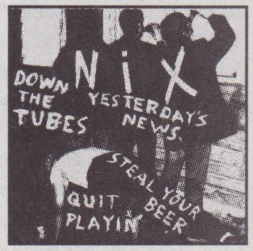
I predict that this will be the “bragging rights” single of 2005 for hopeless punk collectors. Portland’s NIX have easily wormed their way into the top spot for me this year (thus far). Folks from the FLIP-TOPS and BEDPANS belt out four drunken, catchy, skuzzy numbers over this one-sided, self-released tomfoolery. The infectious and lame-brained vibe running throughout falls in line with some of the Pacific Northwest brethren, but these four aces have me drooling in a way those cutie-pies never could. I’ve already told everyone I know to buy this, so get going nerds! Fan-fucking-tastic! (MC)
($4 ppd: Rob Felkel, 2724 SE Belmont St., Portland, OR 97214, robfelkel@yahoo.com)





Piston Whipped
MOTORPSYCHOS

NicE BoyS
You Won't See Me



NOFX – "Arming the Proletariat with Potato Guns" EP

One more addition here to NOFX's singles club. Side A is a kind of throwaway song recorded in what sounds like a live setting (though I'm pretty sure it's just studio tricks, with added in applause and all). El Hefe plays licks on his trumpet in between jokes by different band members. Some pretty funny shite—standard fare if you ever seen 'em live. Side B is a stock NOFX song with lyrics about Jesus coming back and kicking Mel Gibson's ass/being generally disappointed in us/doing hard drugs. In all honesty, not a great song for NOFX but I have a big old sweet spot for this band so the song cracked me the heck up. (WL)

(Fat Wreck)

NORTH LINCOLN – "Truth Is a Menace" CD

You'd think these cats had penned this LP in the swamps of Florida instead of the northern wastes of Michigan where they actually come from. This is total No Idea, like the catchiest HOT WATER MUSIC mixed with the party anthems of GRABASS CHARLESTONS and some GUNMOLL snarl. If there were prizes being given out for originality then these guys wouldn't even make the shortlist, but fuck originality, who needs it when the tunes keep rocking? (TB)

(www.noidearecords.com)

NOW DENIAL – "Power to the Mountain" LP

This is the American NOW DENIAL, not the German one, so beware when you come across this record, because the two bands sound quite different! This record is a mixture of modern straight-up hardcore-punk, screamo, and rock. The problem with it is that it sounds like so many of the bands that are around today. Rock guitar riffs, some screaming vocals, a metal riff thrown in here and there, etc. You know the drill. It's not that this record isn't OK but with the gazillion records coming out these days I just couldn't find anything on here that makes this stand out among the bulk of releases. Also I couldn't find a lyric sheet, which I thought was lame, so I can't really comment on the lyrics of this band. The song titles seem kind of funny with names like "The Medium is the Massage" and "Shit Talk in the Zen Garden." I don't know. I just couldn't get excited about this. (JD)

(Tor Johnson, www.torjohnson.com)

ONE.POINT.THREE – "Midwestern Apathy" CD

Hmmm, an odd band that I'm at odds trying to find a convenient comparison for—which is usually a good thing. They're ostensibly a metalcore band most directly in the COALESCE style of weird mid-pace rhythm fuckery, but their sound varies a good amount on the disc—sometimes to places it shouldn't go, like some UNSANE-like "rock" tendencies that I could do without—but I'd say it works more often than not. They remind me a bit of some of the bands from the Northeast such as NON COMPOS or SCISSORFIGHT, or even some of the old Am Rep style turned up a notch or two. Probably worthy of at least a listen or two. (EL)

(one.point.three, www.1point3.com)

THE OPPRESSED – "Skinhead Times 1982–1998" 2xCD

About fucking time!! Far and away the best oi band of all time, their LP *Oi Oi Music* still gets played round my house, and when I got it back in the 80s I played it to death. Throughout their long career this band has been one of the most actively anti-fascist bands out there (especially in the often "apolitical" oi scene). Just check out some of the song titles: "Fuck Fascism," "BNP (You're Full of Shite)," "Nazi Nightmare," etc. In fact, after the band split they reformed in response to the growth of fascist skinheads in the British Isles. Disc one is all the 80s goods (including the LP) and is my favorite stuff, including the absolute classic "Urban Soldiers." The music and lyrics are pretty simplistic, but they have a character and charm that sets them apart from most other bands in this genre. Disc two is more of the same from the 90s, compiling all their 7"s from that time—no clunkers here at all, but the gems are still on the first disc. Nice packaging with photos and history make for an absolute must buy. Nice one! (TB)

(Insurgence, 2 Bloor St. W. Suite 100-184, Toronto, Ontario, M4W 3E2, CANADA)

THE OPPRESSED – "Won't Say Sorry" CD

A double disc of covers throughout the years by this UK oi band. 35 tracks over two discs with the music of SHAM 69, COCKNEY REJECTS, SLADE, NEUROTICS, and EDDIE & THE HOT RODS, just to scratch the surface. It's cool because they turn it up a notch from the originals—I'm digging it! (RL)

(Insurgence, 2 Bloor St. W. Suite 100-184, Toronto, Ontario, M4W 3E2, CANADA, www.theoppressed.co.uk)

THE PARKINSONS – "Its All Greek to Me" CD

Actually, I just made up the title to the CD. It may or may not actually have a title. Either way, it's all in Greek. Literally. This band is Greek. They sing in Greek (presumably—its definitely not in English), and the Greek alphabet being what it is, the lyrics and liner notes are equally indecipherable. Fortunately, there is a one-panel insert in English, which tells us non-Greeks (and English speakers) that this is a totally DIY project, not-for-profit, and that any extra dough (apparently they are selling it for cheap) will go into the local anti-commercial scene where they live. The songs were recorded between 2002 and 2004, and include their first 15-song demo, and another 13 songs they did later. Musically, they play fairly musical, melodic punk, reminiscent of the mid-80s anarcho bands such as the DISRUPTERS, LOST CHEREES, et al. Some nice spirit here (as far as I can tell), and twin male and female vocals, typically singing in unison all the time. (RK)

(George Giastas, Adamochristou 4, 26225, Patra, GREECE, www.diymadness.tk)

PEDESTRIANS – "Why Kill What's Dead" EP

There seems to be a resurgence in straight-ahead, catchy, mid-tempo punk rock, like all the hardcore kids realized that there was more to life than playing 1000mph through a heavy metal distortion pedal. PEDESTRIANS features ex-members of other bands that sounded different but this EP has four songs that pack a punch while still being catchy enough to have you humming them all day. I'm all for this. (AM)

(Southkore, 2814 S. Spaulding Ave, Chicago, IL)

PEPPERMINTS – "Jesüs Chryst" CD

Total noisy art-damaged party rock here. Little wee-dee-lee-nee guitar bit followed by choatic blasts. The cover art shows them at the Last Supper getting wasted and having a food fight. That's kinda what this sounds like too. (PC)

(Paw Tracks, PO Box 20368, NY, NY 10009, www.paw-tracks.com)

POKERS – "Strap-On Disasters... " CD

The UK is blowing up with rockin' garage bands these days, and this band is right in the thick of it. Rumour has it Rip Off Records was supposed to put these guys out, but Lowery snoozed so they did it themselves. Well, your loss Lowery 'cos this fuggin' smokes. Sure it has that Rip Off sound, but there's a distinct English punk

sound in there too. Imagine any of the early Rip Off bands mixed with the LURKERS or early VIBRATORS. This is some catchy, raw punk shit. Snooze and you lose. (TB)
(Ultra A.D, www.thepokers.co.uk)

PURE IMPACT – "Heartache" CD

PURE IMPACT plays ten songs of Boston-style street punk that would fit in with a band like DROPKICK MURPHYS. Their sound is something like a mix of SHAM 69, MOTÖRHEAD, and SOCIAL DISTORTION. There's nothing spectacular here, just old-timey punk in good fun. (WL)
(Welfare, PO Box 35573, Brighton, MA 02135, www.welfarerecords.net)

REAL LOSERS – "Gimme Action" EP

I like the REAL LOSERS: several months ago, in an irony-free moment, I put permanent marker to soup-stained t-shirt and made myself a hand-crafted REAL LOSERS t-shirt (that I've yet to wear). This British three-piece might not have been around in time to ride the Rip Off Records rocket express to super-stardom, but they would have fit in just fine with that crop—they're loud, fast, mostly dumb and make certain that their records sound like shit. A little too much, maybe: *Gimme Action* sounds great, like a cannibalized SPLASH FOUR with the punkometer dialed to 10, but the shit-tastic sound quality really does detract from the honest-to-gosh rock 'n' roll the band ladle out. I guess the remedy is to see REAL LOSERS in real life and on stage: any chance you three could swing a tour and pay a visit to the Far West? (JH)
(High School Reject, Berlageweg 12, 9731 LN Groningen, NETHERLANDS, ktus@yahoo.com)

REATARDS – "Plastic Surgery" EP

I am going to assume this is the newly reformed REATARDS. There is just a certain quality these songs have. I'd rather not call it "clean production" 'cause compared to the other crap out there these songs sound five thousand times better. It is a bit cleaner than past REATARDS records, but that doesn't change the great songs, Jay's fantastic vocals, and the lack of Casios. The REATARDS were—and apparently still are—such a cool band. (CK)
(Shattered, www.geocities.com/shatteredrecs)

REEKO – "Year Ecad" CD

Six songs of fairly bland alternative rock. At its best there's a hint of mid-90s UK emo like BOB TILTON or maybe FABRIC or something like that, but much of it plods along a bit like HELMET. Still, it keeps them off the streets I suppose. (AM)
(Freakscene, C/O Cavern Club, 83-84 Queen Street, Exeter EX4 3RP, UNITED KINGDOM, www.freakscene.co.uk)

REIGN OF BOMBS / EARTH DIES SCREAMING – split EP

REIGN OF BOMBS from Sweden plays two songs of hard-charging D-beat crust. EARTH DIES SCREAMING, also from Sweden follows suit on the flipside with their own brand of heavily distorted hardcore. Both vocalists for EARTH DIES SCREAMING have incredibly abrasive growls, which is almost distracting at times. But I stuck it out and ended up being dually impressed with both bands outputs. You have to check this one out for sure! (RC)
(Cage Match Federation)

RESTLESS YOUTH – "State of Confusion" CDEP

A lot of people back home have been raving about this new Dutch band and that got me pretty curious, but up till this point I had never heard them. Well, shame on me, because this stuff is fucking cool. Fast old-school hardcore with a singer that sounds exactly like HR from the BAD BRAINS (no kidding!) and in general the BB reference is pretty accurate (minus the reggae parts). This CD includes the *State of Confusion* 7" and their demo, which is great as well. I think I might like the demo tracks even more, because the HR resemblance is just a little less obvious than on the newer tracks, but all in all this CD is fucking awesome. I can't wait to see this band live when I get home in a few weeks. "The youth is restless and they're fighting back!" Fuck yeah! Highly recommended! (JD)
(Dead& Gone, 17 Driver Street, Sheffield, S13 9WP, UK, www.deadandgone.uk)

REVOLVERS – "It's Christmas Time Again" EP

German punk on this Christmas EP. A produced DIE TOTEN HOSEN meets the PISTOLS' *Swindle* sound. It's decent, but it's nothing great. It also includes not the best version of GEORGE MICHAEL's "Last Christmas" I've heard. (RL)
(Stereodrive, www.the-revolvers.com)

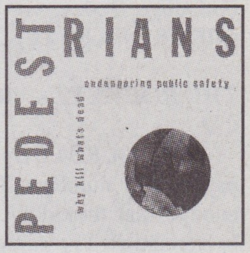
RIFU – "Dead End Street" CD

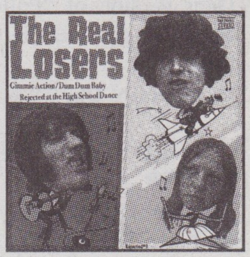
Angry, political punk just on the hardcore side of the fence. It starts off okay but, like the singer's voice, quickly becomes a little strained. Though it's upbeat and well played, it's just a little too contrived. (AD)
(Go Kart, PO Box 20, New York, NY 10012)

RIISTETYT – "2000-2005" CD

Last month I reviewed the newest RIISTETYT EP, *Kahleet*, which is also featured on this 31-track later-years collection by legendary Finnish band. I must admit, I have only paid cursory attention to the recent life of RIISTETYT, but after giving this disc a couple of spins I have to say that for the most part, it has been my loss entirely. The earliest stuff, from their *Tervetuola Kuolema* EP (still in print on Havoc Records) is really fucking excellent. While it sounds distinctly Finnish in song structure and vocal inflection, it is not at all a boring rehash of their classic-era sound. There is definitely some guitar chunkiness and thicker sounding vocals on some of these tracks (probably influenced by the last decade's trends in Scandinavian hardcore), but all those but the most stubborn adherents to RIISTETYT's early sound will be pleased with how this band has progressed. Sure, I will always be partial to *Skitsofrenia*, and sure. RIISTETYT's new stuff is more metallic than I pre-

THE OPPRESSED
SKINHEAD TIMES
1982 - 1995




The Real Losers
Gimmie Action / Dum Dum Baby
Rejected at the High School Dance

REATARDS
PLASTIC SURGERY

Riistetyt
2000 - 2005

fer, but really I'd rather have a band grow and expand on their sound (while staying punk as fuck, natch) than to keep putting out the same record for 20 years. Cheers to RIISTETYT for staying DIY! (GN)
(Havoc, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408)

RIVER CITY TANLINES – "Gimme Whatever" EP

Whatever it is, indeed. The TANLINES are one of the multiple plotlines spun off from Memphis' LOST SOUNDS: this being fronted by keyboard player Alicja, driven by a punk rock urge to act out violently. It's catchy stuff, really, with her voice buzzing through the air like some electro-fed viola, guitars sliding past in the mix like malfunctioning Norelco razors. If you're looking for a less-indie alternative to modern-era LOST SOUNDS, the RIVER CITY TANLINES will fill the need. (JH)
(Goodbye Boozy, via Villa Pompetti 147, 64020 S. Nicolo (TE) ITALY)

THE ROCKETZ – "Rise of the Undead" CD

The ROCKETZ rip through some solid psychobilly numbers. These guys are good enough that they don't need to overdo the horror shtick. The guitarist has a great sense of rockabilly with plenty of tasty licks. Their version of "Police on my Back" is almost as good as the CLASH's rendition. Good stuff. (HM)
(Psychobilly US, www.therocketz.com)

THE ROTTEN FRUITS – "Abomination" EP

These queer punks have made a funny EP here. The animated, snotty and whiny vocals spew shockingly naughty messages. Their music can be a little simple, sloppy, and subdued, but the vocals elevate the energy and propel the songs into some serious absurdity. For example "Skinhead Boys," a ska style tune, works well with the whole skinhead homosexual adventure—it leaves me weak-kneed and light-headed! Bold, brash, and beautiful! (HM)
(Criminal IQ, 3540 N Southport, Chicago, IL 60657, www.crimnaliq.com)

SACK-O-WOES – "Baby I'm Born Old" EP

Garage punk with plenty of swagger by a bunch of Dutch old-timers; ex-VERNON WALTERS (remember them?) for those counting. A NEW BOMB TURKS reference would be throwaway but not too far from the mark. I could see this shit coming out on Deadbeat or Empty over here. Fans of the genre would do well to track it down, although there are not quite enough hooks to keep it ahead of the pack for me. A decent effort. (TB)
(Looprekords, Schakelstraat 71, 1617 VD Westwoud, HOLLAND)

SAME DAY SERVICE – CD

All-girl group from Texas with punky indie stuff that reminds me of the C86 era of SHOP ASSISTANTS as well the HISSY-FITS. Great vocal harmonies with good DIY under-production. A cool seven-track release, especially for fans of the gal stuff. (RL)
(Captiva, www.sdsrocks.com)

SAM LAWRENCE 5 – "Death Throes from the Rust Belt" CD

There are some bands that work really hard but don't act like they know they're great, when they really are. On the other hand there are bands that just want to compare themselves to all of their heroes. The liner notes compare SAM LAWRENCE 5 to the CLASH, the MISFITS, and even DEMENTED ARE GO. My honest opinion is that they sound nothing like any of those bands. I mean, the liner notes try to draw parallels between the ethics of the band to the CLASH. Sorry, but I doubt the CLASH would write songs called "Devil in my Pants" or "Rock'n'roll Jackass." They should've scrapped the lengthy egotism of the guy who put out the CD—who's obviously trying to put the band on a pedestal—and just written down some of the lyrics to their songs for me to inspect. I might have liked them more. This band has more in common with ELVIS HITLER or the BRUISERS musically than DEMENTED ARE GO. They play a mediocre punk-a-billy/oi mix. This CD starts with a clip from the movie *Romper Stomper*, got it. (WK)
(Double Hell, www.doublehell.com)

SCREAMIN' MEE-MEES – Live from the Basement 1975-96" LP

This is one of those bands that the *Killed by Death*™ franchise dragged up from unjustly forgotten obscurity, dusted off, and stood upright with axe in hand, and unlike others who were too deceased or sublimely educated to pick up the stix again properly, this fearsome twosome was born to rock. This comp has their original 1977 *Live from the Basement* EP, their never-released-until-1995 follow-up, and the singles they tossed off upon their early 90s resurrection, which are just as good as their mid-70's dementia. The sound here is (literally) basement folk-psych with a healthy dose of attitude, enough to entice punkier listeners into the fray. I mean, if you can listen to CRAMPS demos, you can dig these guys, seriously. All of you wish your Dad were as cool as these reprobates, but trust me, he ain't. Completists: some of the tracks on here are different versions than the original 7", you've been warned. You don't really think Hasil Adkins *died* do you? (RW)
(Hate/Vulcher, Via S. Giovanni In Laterano, 192/194, 00184 Roma, ITALY)

SHADOW REICHENSTEIN – "Werewolf Order" CD

Hell yes! I get to review another horror punk/metal band from Fiend Force. That makes six of their nine bands! Yep, SHADOW REICHENSTEIN is predictable and contrived, but somehow these guys are a bit different…maybe they're not as metal as the rest, maybe it's their "Bela was a Junkie" song, or because Boog Nasty plays drums and Shadow plays the shovels and photoshops in his widow's peak. It's ridiculous, but entertaining. (HM)
(Fiend Force, www.fiendforce.com, www.shadowreichenstein.com)

THE SHAMS – "Gotta Be Something / Go On Livin" 45

Two very different sides to this record. Side A is a slow, melancholy, piano-led garage tune that drags. Side B picks it up and sounds a bit like the REIGNING SOUND when they rock out. The Southern twang on the vocals makes it extra nice. (CK)
(Licorice Tree, PO Box 92783, Austin, TX 78709, www.licoricetree.com)

SHEER TERROR – "Complete Documentary" DVD

Often copied but never equaled, SHEER TERROR sits at the top of the pile of East Coast hardcore. This DVD includes a documentary of the band and the full live set from their "reunion/funeral" shows back in 2004. It also includes the video for the song "Broken," which I had never seen before. I thought the documentary was pretty well done. It went through the history of the band with interviews from a variety of people and a lot of live footage to boot (including some cool shots from the early years). The pacing and editing was good and I didn't find it boring at all. Plus the live footage from reunion show was well done with good quality sound and camera work. And as a bonus, it also included a CD with a recording of the full live set that is on the DVD. All and all a great release and well worth checking out if you are a fan of the band. (RC)
(Thorp, PO Box 6786, Toledo, OH 43612, www.thorprecords.com)

THE SHINING – A Song for the Rest of the World... Except You of Course!" EP

Fast, pissed off hardcore from my home country, the Netherlands. The music is somewhere in between straight-up fastcore and the more crossover style of bands like DFA, MUNICIPAL WASTE or DRI. The lyrics wouldn't be misplaced on an MDC or SEEIN' RED record. They deal with issues such as war, religion and the end of world. I really enjoyed this record a lot and the SHINING proves to be a cool addition to the list of fast hardcore bands that Holland has spawned over the last couple of years. Be sure to check this out along with some of the other Dutch and Brazilian bands that recently have done (split) records on the UPS label. (JD)
(UPS, Vliegtuiglaan 3, 3769 JM Soesterberg, NETHERLANDS, www.go.to/upspunk)

THE SHIT DOGS – "World War III" LP

Rave Up Records has dubbed the SHIT DOGS as "Lousiana Punk Rock Rednecks," which, in all honesty, is a valid description. Anyone familiar with *Killed by Death* should immediately recognize good ol' Wheelie Bloodtongue and company from "Reborn," which is thankfully included here, along with both singles and choice cuts from their lone LP. Now that we have the collector formalities out of the way, I'm pleased as punch to finally hear what else this band had to offer. The SHIT DOGS are charmingly moronic and poppy in a GIZMOS sort of way, but they go far enough out to force me to hunt for some reference to Cleveland proto legends… but I just end up saying fuck it and keep flipping this fucker over for repeated spins. I'm cool with being the Rave Up guy around these parts if they can keep this hot streak up. Volume #44 and better than ever! (MC)
(Rave Up, Via Crispolti 16 – 00159, Rome, ITALY)

SHREDDER –CD

Furious hardcore that mixes a fast and aggressive East Coast style with an occasional blast beat. The CD contains six songs, plus a few live tracks including a cover of "I'd Rather Be Sleeping" by DRI. I really liked this CD, except for the shallow and weak sounding drum sound. Nevertheless, this is a worthwhile debut. (RC)
(www.holyshitrecords.tk)

SIDE EFFECTS– "Saturday Night Suicide" CD

Rough and ready: less punk than motorcycle-repair shop. The SIDE EFFECTS are kinda half-DICTATORS (guitar sounds, especially) and part gravel-throated sleaze in the ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN vein. Chronic self-abusers will dig it. (JH)
(Welfare, PO Box 35573, Allston, MA 02135, www.welfarerecords.net)

SIGNS OF COLLAPSE – "Weep for the Lives Your Wishes Never Led" CD

If you dig metal influenced emotive hardcore, with nods to contemporary mainstream MTV 2-core, than you probably don't read this shit rag for what weak ass music to purchase. No, your parents hard earned cash probably goes to some other glossy covered crap 'zine. From which, you drool over all the bands that rip off snippets of underground hardcore songs note for note and top it off with some soulless- funk, stupid lyrics, shameful phrasing, and slick LA-style studio treatments. Bands, when your singer wants to record some of their own poetry as an in the studio afterthought, let them. But, put it on disc for them to take home, don't put it on your fucking record. And, definitely don't let that said poetry / spoken word piece become the intro to your album; *Reservoir Dogs*, and *American Psycho* samples only add to the smacking irrelevance of this record. (BS)
(Saw Her Ghost, www.sawherghost.com)

SKATE KORPSE – "Down" EP

Wow, I was surprised at how much I like this! SKATE KORPSE's second (and final) EP is a clear improvement from their nifty debut. The band still has a sparse, clean, reverb-heavy guitar sound and a skate-/surf-punk feel a la JFA. The songwriting on this release, however, is more solid than their debut, and I can hear a melodic SoCal influence creeping into their songs. The title track is a bona fide classic, and would not have been out of place on the first ADOLESCENTS album. It is a pity that the band is now broken up and that this fine EP is limited to a mere 200 copies. (CS)
($5 ppd: DSK, 1723 Park Meadow Drive, Jamestown, NY 14701)

SPINA NEL FIANCO – "Sula Cativa Strada" CD

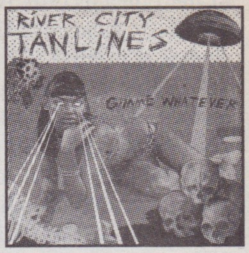
Spirited anarchist punk rock from Italy. Anti-state lyrics (in Italian with English translations) backed by catchy punk rock, which reminds me of a lot of the early German bands SLIME, TOXOPLASMA, etc, as well as some of the faster UK82 bands like the THREATS or the FITS. (TB)
(www.areapirata.com)

THE STABILISERS – "Evil Picnic" EP

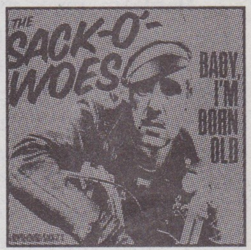
Those Medway veterans just refuse to call it a day. Christ, their wives must hate them, their kids embarrassed, and their poor mothers wondering if they'll ever grow up. And whilst punching out EPs like this, why the fuck should they? Super catchy power-pop with a distinct '77 flavor. Of course we got the garage—hell, considering the pedigree of the line-up did you expect anything less? Boasting familiar faces from the PRISONERS, GOOD CHILD, SERGENTS MESS etc, taking the two-minute pop of the 'TONE, the crafty humor of HARD SKIN and the uppity punk of the ADVERTS, creating a contender for single of the year. One big smiley face and two massive thumbs up. (SD)
(Nicotine, PO Box 165, 15057 Tortona, ITALY, www.nicotinerecords.com)

STALAG 13 – "In Control" LP

I know a lot people think this record is a SoCal positive hardcore classic. And while it may have had a huge impact on the classic OC straight edge sound,



THE ROCKETZ
RISE OF THE UNDEAD



THE SHINING

SKATE KORPSE

Extended Play 45 rpm
THE STABILISERS
Evil Picnic

it still doesn't compare in speed or intensity to the other records from this time period put out by bands like UNITY, and Nardcore alumni ILL REPUTE. My main complaint lies in the vocalist. In his attempts to add melody, he just comes off sounding bored. That being said, this record is still better than half of the stuff coming out today. The opening track, "Conditioned" is catchy as hell. Lyrics to songs like "In Control" and "Clean Up Your Act" hint at the straight edge philosophy without coming off as too heavy-handed. If nothing else, the front and back cover artwork by the great Jamie Hernandez offers a perfect glimpse into a time before YOUTH OF TODAY, where checkered shorts and skateboards ruled the (not-so militant) straight edge scene. (CC)
(SOA, Paolo Petralia, Via Oderisi Da Gubbio 67/69, 00146 Roma, ITALY)

STILYAGI – "You're a Fucking Liar" EP

Hardcore punk with emo influences. The vocals are pretty high-pitched and the music is pretty straightforward, but sometimes goes in the direction of being a little arty (especially the hand claps in the second song). Some Gravity records bands came to mind, like UNIVERSAL ORDER OF ARMAGEDDON, but I don't really know if that's a good comparison, or what to make of this exactly. It's neither really bad nor really good. It does seem to be done with love, but that doesn't make this an essential record. (JD)
(4913 Cypress St., Pittsburgh PA 15224)

STRAIGHT EDGE KEGGER – "Fuck Fresno" LP

Life is cruel, and the pain is too great. Dissect your eyes, remove cancerous thrash riffage from the bowels of punk history, ignore the coverage of the MINOR THREAT. Mend torn limbs, burned fingers will grow new skin; misguided handling of the sacred scripture of holy hardcore progressions will go unnoticed by some, and scratch at the pysche of others like nails to a chalkboard. Friends will go on to community college, get jobs, make babies, and eat the flesh of their aging brethren. Better than you could do, but still this release won't stack higher than any other pile of crud this month. (BS)
(Torture Garden Picture Company, www.torturegardenpictures.com)

STRAIGHTJACKET – "Enemy / 30+ Years" 45

It's a bold move to model your pic sleeve after the BUZZCOCKS *Orgasm Addict* 7". Bold, indeed. I think it sets up expectations. Maybe it even sets up expectations that are too high. It's not the BUZZCOCKS, but it is solid, catchy punk rock, with more than just a hint of new wave. I've got to say, it's growing on me and I'm going to give it my endorsement. (KK)
(Johnny Cat, PO Box 42301, Portland, OR, 97242, www.straightjacket.net)

STRAIGHTJACKET – "Modern Thieves" CD

I dunno. I guess, being on TKO, I was expecting something heavier. Yknow, tougher on the streets. What you do get is, much to my pleasant surprise, 13 tracks of spiky pop-punk. They cover a CHELSEA song from their excellent *Evacuate* album (by far their most melodic and guitar-driven), which is a fair representation of where their sound is. Mix in some of the snot of mid-period SCREECHING WEASEL and lots of lead fills and you have a pretty decent concoction. (RK)
(TKO, www.tkorecords.com)

STRESSFAKTOR – CD

STRESSFAKTOR from Germany plays really proficient 80s style European melodic punk. I actually really like them. The songs are a little quirky at times, which only adds to their appeal. I can't say I've heard very many bands like them. Not at all what I expected from a CD that looked very metal in layout and design. There is sort of a anthemic feel in some of their songs which is reminiscent of a lot of Eastern European bands, Poland comes to mind first. All of the lyrics are in German so I really don't have any idea what they are singing about. This is worth another couple listens at least. (WK)
(Freibeuter Hermann-Sauter-Str. 9, 76829 Landau, GERMANY, www.friebeuter-records.de)

THE STRUGGLE – "In Protest of an Empty Future" CD

A solid release of convincing, energetic, spiky-topped hardcore punk from this Massachusetts band. Unlike a lot of the Welfare Records stuff that came in this month (the KNOX, MARTIAL LAW), this CD features an excellent, full-sounding (but not at all slick) recording, which benefits the STRUGGLE greatly. The songs are suitably fast, the vocals have a classic, desperate feel, and many of the bass lines and guitar lines are instantly memorable. Hey, this is as hardcore as DISORDER and sounds kind of sounds like DEFIANCE! Recommended for sure for fans of the UK82 model or the best in the current wave of street punk. I don't even feel cheesy when I follow the lyrics along, though they are almost all about how "the struggle" "cannot destroy us," even through our many "hopeless nights" and endless "pain and angst." (GN)
(Welfare, PO Box 35573, Brighton, MA 02135, www.welfarerecords.net)

SUBURBAN DEATH MACHINE – "Fuck the Scene, We're..." EP

SUBURBAN DEATH MACHINE cranks out some old school hardcore reminding me of MDC and CORRUPTED MORALS. Their lyrics have a pessimistic view that's and their vocals are seething with frustration. Totally1980s dude. Side two ends with an endless loop of feedback—perfect for clearing the room. Good record. (HM)
(Urban Death Mission, c/o Ian Ryan, 4746 Friendship Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15224)

SURF NAZIS MUST DIE – "Anti-Everything" EP

A reissue of this German band's only EP, called *Anti-Everything,* brought to us by no-longer-a-punk, not-yet-a-hipster Mark McCoy on his Youth Attack imprint. I had never heard this before, which is a shame because it's totally snotty, fun hardcore/punk. The lyrics are pretty dumb in an I-hate-the-kids-and-the-kids-hate-me kinda way, but luckily you can't really make out with the singer is saying anyway. This has an early 80s vibe, but unlike AMDI PETERSON'S ARME or something, I would never make the mistake of thinking this actually was from '81. Overall a solid record, and one I'm sure people have been looking for, though the hyper-sexualized insert art this label has come to be associated with (displayed here in the eye-roll inducing form of a "how to fuck this record" instructional comic) is beyond played at this point. (GN)
(Youth Attack, www.ihateyouthattack.com)

THE TEENAGE IDOLS – "Erase Me" CDEP

This is the first "single" from their second album *Something Wicked.* The TEENAGE IDOLS have a garage-y sixties feel with slick production. Both songs are pretty good, but I'm not even tempted to get their full-length CD. Oh well... (HM)
(Playground, www.playgroundmusic.com, www.teenageidols.net)

THE TEMPLARS – "Clockwork Orange Horror Show" EP

It has been a decade since this release first graced my ears. The TEMPLARS have always played a great modernized mixture of pub rock and oi that has made them one of the top names in either genre going for the last 10-plus years, Sure, they have had their

share of controversy and been misunderstood, but what punker hasn't been confused and left shaking their head by a skinhead in their lifetime? The only thing I wished about the TEMPLARS is that they would finally get into a studio that could make them sound louder, 'cause besides containing some rocking tunes, *Clockwork Orange Horror Show* also suffers from a lack of decent production values. A good release to drink beer to. (JF)
(Templecombe, PO Box 602, Bayshore, NY 11706)

THUMBS UP! – "We're All Fucked" EP
The title of this record refers to the drawing of a smiling George Bush on the cover. THUMBS UP! plays good, traditional, fast hardcore with screamed lyrics about war, revenge, and the aforementioned president. Apparently they have beef with the BEASTIE BOYS as well. Throw in a cover of the PIST's "The Customer is Always Right," and you have a pretty darn good record. (CC)
(Room 13, www.room13records.com)

TOKYO ELECTRON – "Will Put a Charge in You" EP
The second EP from TOKYO ELECTRON is the kind of mid-speed punk trash that catches you off-guard: screaming vocals that sound like a terrified Lux Interior has equal billing with some catchy guitar riffing, recorded with a high-treble distortion. On "Innocent" particularly, the result is arresting, and "The Burn in Hell" has that same toe-tap-ability. Perhaps not as outstanding as their debut, if you're taking score, but it's still fun stuff. (SS)
(Shattered, www.geocities.com/shatteredrecs)

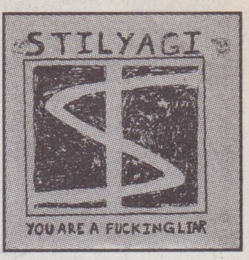
TRACK THE CURSE – "The New Land" CD
I don't get this CD at all. The first few tracks on here are metallic hardcore songs with burly death-metal/grind vocals, which sound pretty bad, even though they are apparently done by the guy from ASSUCK. I guess they fit ASSUCK's brutal onslaught of hardcore and grind well, but over this slower-paced music they sound horribly boring. In their bio I read that this band also features an ex-member of DOWN BY LAW, but that is an influence you really don't hear in this at all until the fourth track, which is a fucking pop-punk song! It sounds like I'm listening to a completely different band all of a sudden! Throughout the remainder of the CD the grind and pop-punk vocals are alternated and the music remains metallic hardcore for the most part with some melody and pop-punk parts thrown in here and there. The music and the vocals aren't interesting or intense at all and the weird combination of styles makes this painful to listen to. ASSUCK and DOWN BY LAW were both bands that I liked at certain points in my life and that I can still listen to and enjoy, but this combination of the two is really horrible. Please stay away from this and don't let the "ex-members" thing fool you. Please, I beg you. (JD)
(Spins Good, PO Box 2301, Staunton, VA 24401, www.spinsgoodrecords.com)

TRAGICZ – "Music for Haters, Vol. 7" EP
I know nothing about this band and the pic sleeve provides no additional information. This is like two different records to me. The first side is decent, mid-tempo punk rock that isn't terribly memorable. It certainly is nothing to be ashamed of, but it doesn't make much of an impression. You get the feeling that the band is concentrating more on getting the notes right than delivering the songs with enthusiasm. The B-side really picks up, though, and really rocks. Maybe they drank a gallon of coffee in between recording the two sides. I don't know, but I can tell you that it is like night and day. The second side also reminds me of some other band, and I'd give somebody a quarter if they'd tell me. (KK)
(Hate, via S. Giovannie in Laterano 194, 00184 Roma, ITALY, www.haterecords.com)

THE TRAUMATICS – "Punk Revenge" CD
A pretty damn cool release we have here from this old Italian band that I have never heard of. The first 13 tracks of this CD is stuff from their *Last Kids from Nowhere* LP that came out in 1998, and the rest is previously unreleased stuff from 1980. The stuff from the LP is quite good, with a vibe that screams midpaced European punk from the early 80s. Would have fit right at home soundwise with early EX records or stuff from the peace punk era. The tracks recorded in 1980 don't fare so well with them sounding like a band that wants to sound like the various bands that were around at the time. A we-got-our-instruments-and-now-lets-jam-to-the-songs-we-like kind of thing. That being said, those tracks do have an enthusiasm that only youth can bring. (JF)
(www.areapirate.com)

UNDERHILLS – "What Went Wrong" CD
Speedy melodic punk from Southern California that sounds very close to TEEN IDOLS, MOPES, LILLINGTONS, QUEERS, and of course SCREECHING WEASEL. Nothing original but it's well written, well played, it *sounds* good, and the singer has a good voice. Apparently they broke up in '02 and reformed last year. I'd never heard of them until now, but I'll keep my eyes peeled for them coming up the coast to play. Ahh... the super sweet summer sounds of 1994. (AD)
(Cabana, PMB#195, 315 S. Coast HWY 101, Suite 4, Encinitas, CA 92024)

UNKIND – "Ei Mitään" LP
This record is so good for so many reasons that it's kind of hard to describe! The vocals are a perfect blend of singing and shouting in a way that feels desperate and urgent, with lyrics in both English and Finnish. The guitars are layered but still have the right amount of chunk and grit when it is needed—they even use some odd stringed instruments such as mandolin and violin to strengthen the more melodic parts of songs. The drums are inventive and yet also have a straightforward appeal. The bass compliments the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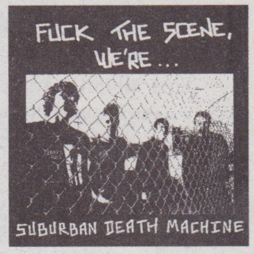
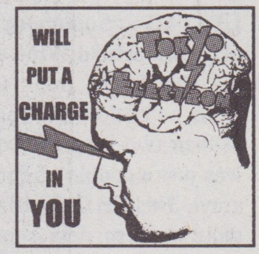




TRAVMATIK
PUNK REVENGE

overall sound in a there-but-not-overbearing way. Unlike many records, this has an overall feeling of cohesiveness in that the songs seem like they belong together on an LP. The end of the record contains a more traditional Irish folk sounding song, but it still sounds good. If you've never heard of UNKIND from Finland, you should. They have all the elements that make bands like TRAGEDY and early-era NEUROSIS great, and also have their own unique sound and style. This is their first full-length but they have a extensive catalog including multiple EPs, a 10", and a 12" to back them up. They have been around for quite awhile, so if you've never heard them here is a great introduction. This record will be played often. (WK)
(Combat Rock Industries, PO Box 65, 11101 RMK, FINLAND, www.fireinside-music.com)

UNION JACK – "You Don't Really Know Who I Am" CD

This album starts out with some pretty gutsy samples but the majority of the rest of it is pretty decent punk-ska songs that sound a lot like CHOKING VICTIM or maybe RUDIMENTS. The lyrics are politically charged, some of which is right-on, and some of which is extremist left-wing propaganda. Later in the album, I find their songs drifting into TRANSPLANTS-like territory with keyboard parts and record scratching (no shit!). The recording is a big production that has its moments and surpasses mediocrity only to find kind-of-funny some of the time. (WL)
(Beer, 42 Rue De La Plante Des Champs, 95360 Montmagny, FRANCE. www.beer-records.com)

UPSTAB – "Somebody Threw a Gallon Jug of Thunderbird Wine at Me" EP

This is the true vinyl debut for these Ohio ne'er-do-wells (and scene veterans!), as their two-song EP from a year or so back was just a couple of demo tracks pressed to vinyl. This EP finds them with a definitively more modern, less snotty sound than said demo EP, giving them less of a *Nervous Breakdown*/proto-hardcore feel and more of a nihilistic and pissed off sound. The songs are faster, too. This record is sure to appeal to fans of the H-100s/NINE SHOCKS TERROR/Midwestern HC family tree as well as everyone still fuckin' pumped about angry and raw hardcore punk. A rager! (GN)
(Even Worse, Noel de Boer, Saenredamstraat 44-2, 1072 CH Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS, noel@outlet.nl)

URBAN RIOT – "Public Enemies" CD

Oh dear. Why do I get this garbage? NYC tough-guy, skinhead/hardcore nonsense. These guys are big and burly, and will never die, and will cut you with razors cos they rule the night, and they will fight and die for this country (though apparently haven't done so yet—why haven't they joined the army to defend our freedoms, then!?), and will burn squatters. They don't like working too much, though, and thought Giuliani was a fascist. The music is sore-throat, straightforward AGNOSTIC FRONT/WARZONE-type stuff, with the odd flash guitar part. Oi! Oi! Get a fucking brain. (RK)
(Headache, www.headacherecords.com)

VAN JOHNSON – CD

Often chaotic but at times quiet and pretty, VAN JOHNSON's style of emo can be compared best to bands like PAGE 99, FUNERAL DINER, AMPERE, or CITY OF CATERPILLAR. Nothing groundbreaking here, but this Canadian band plays the style well, which makes for an enjoyable CD. The artwork reminded me of the STOP IT!!! releases, but I'm not sure if it's the same person who did the artwork for this record. You should check this out if you're into the screamo genre. (JD)
(Exotic Fever, www.exoticfever.com)

VITTU EL KIITOS – "Se On Fuckin' Finland" EP

Whoa! These Finnish punk rockers kick a whole lot of unwashed punk butt on this new Höhnie EP. All the lyrics are in Finnish. Perhaps there are some political diatribes in the words. because they sound pissed off! The vocals are traded off between deep male vocals and high-pitched female vocals and the whole fucking thing works really well. Most of the success of this band can be attributed to the guitar player—he pushes this fucking project over the goddamn top! Excellent! This shit was recorded in 2003. Hopefully something new will be forthcoming! (BR)
(Höhnie, www.hohnierecords.de)

WAR OF WORDS – "A Tale of Friendship" EP

Old school punk from Mass that (on first listen) sounds like it could have been on *A Country Fit For Heroes* or one of those old Riot City comps. WAR OF WORDS, however, doesn't simply do the UK82-spikey-punk-by-the-numbers thing and manages to stir enough originality into their sound to warrant extra listens. This is really good; they put an effort into their lyrics too, which are personal and political without being too contrived. The record ends with the line "So you prejudiced, racist, neo-fascist fucks can go fuck yourselves." I'll second that. (AD)
(Welfare, PO Box 35573, Brighton, MA 02135, www.welfarerecords.net)

WHEREWITHAL – "Sixth Form Poetry" EP

Thinking-woman's sensitive punk from this British band. They bring two good enough songs which kind of remind me of DISCOUNT or the PRETENDERS, but way mellowed out. The execution and recording style are noteworthy—vocals way up front and pretty produced. It's production like this that begs me to ask the question "Are you a punk band or not?" I mean this in all seriousness, if they are trying to be a punk band they have failed— they're not raw enough. If they are trying to be just a rock band then they have also failed, as their songs aren't good enough to hold up in that world. Still, the band is very non-offensive and has many endearing qualities, which is why I gave them this much thought in the first place. (WL)
(Foolproof, PO Box 393; Farnborough, Hants, GU14, 6WY, UNITED KINGDOM)

WHISKEY DICK DARRYLS – "It's My Life" CD

Okay, I was going to make fun of a CD that had only two songs that totaled only 4:21 in playing time. I mean, come on—put it on a 7" instead, just on principle. Then I listened to this and realized that I should be thankful that I didn't have to listen any more tracks for this review. The first song tracked in at the longest 2:54 since my last dental appointment, and the second track was half the time but still barely managed to catch my attention. This sounds like the type of band that would open up for one of the Confederacy Of Scum bands, or maybe play first on a five-band bar bill headlined by a MISFITS cover band. Totally useless, both in music and format. (JF)
(no address...possibly the best thing about this release)

WHISKEY REBELS – "Create or Die" CD

Classic spiky street punk from Sacramento's favorite hard knocks and spiky tops. These boys can play—tight as a nun's quim, with just the right amounts of aggression mixed up with some damn pretty backing vocals. Riddled with sing-along appeal, just like back in the day when the SWINGING UTTERS were good and the

DROPKICK MURPHYS weren't a joke. Driven with the abundant energy of the likes of ANITODE, and CROPKNOX, getting a mix of good ol' blue collar punk Americana with the studded blast of that UK82 sound. (SD)
(GMM, www.whiskeyrebels.com)

WRECK OF OLD '98 – "Calamity" LP

At last, a vinyl document of this short-lived but apparently inspirational band of MINUTEMEN worshippers from Southampton. Being no stranger to a bit of MINUTEMEN appreciation (ahem) myself, I've been looking forward to hearing this band since I was first notified of their existence. What can I say about this record? Great tunes and inspiring, heartfelt lyrics. If you're a fan of the BIG BOYS and the MINUTEMEN, or if you remember the band SOLANKI from Leeds, you should get this ASAP. I'm just disappointed they broke up before I had a chance to see 'em. I can't say enough good things about this. (AM)
(Milliepeed, 3 Cedar Gardens, Portswood, Southampton, SO14 6TG, UNITED KINGDOM, www.milliepeedrecords.co.uk)

VMW – CD

Featuring members of DAS OATH and CHARLES BRONSON, this is an arty dance release with some noisy post punk mood stuff and a few hardcore punk rock songs. Think *Warm Leatherette* followed by early BLACK FLAG mixed with the failed genre of electroclash (which never moved me). This is a great raw full length for the broadminded with some nice touches on their influences. (RL)
(Coalition, www.coalition-records.com)

YUPPIE PRICKS – "Stock Market" EP

This is fuckin' funny. These guys pull off yuppie prickedness very well. The EP packaging is all snide and business-like, and their cover of "Fuck You I'm Rich" is awesome. They also do a fine live version of the MOTARDS "Paycheck" with Paul MOTARD! I definitely gots ta check out their CDs. They remind us to buy low and sell high, so buy this now you fucks! (HM)
(Chicken Ranch, PO Box 9909, Austin, TX 78766, www.chickenranchrecords.com)

ZAPOTEKS – "Ain't Nobody Left but Us" CD

Debut CD of Brit pop-punk *a la* MR T EXPERIENCE. Mid Period MTX, when they'd lost a of the phlegm, and were starting to experiment with 50s pop, Hammond organ, and suchlike. Pretty decent, actually. (RK)
(Stardumb, www.stardumbrecords.com)

V/A – "Giants of Grind" DVD

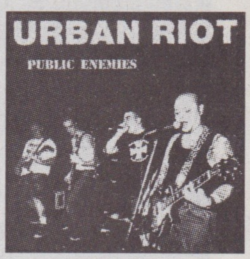
God damn, I can't describe how great this DVD is. It's real simple—if you're a grind fan, get this. I mean how many grind compilation DVDs are there? Not many, and certainly not many as well done as this. This DVD documents the festival of the same name held last summer in Germany set up by the consistently excellent Power It Up label. Two to five songs each from thirteen bands altogether, mostly from the German scene (CYNESS, AUTORITAR, BIZARRE X, SKRUPEL, NEURON, ENTRAILS MASSACRE, SANITYS DAWN, etc), but also a few international guests like Holland's FUBAR and the show's obvious highlights BIRDFLESH and BATHTUB SHITTER. For anyone even remotely interested, this is a great way to experience these bands whom most of us (in the States anyway) will never get to see. Virtually every band delivers a charged and energetic performance, and it's great to see the personality of each band coming through. Plus the recording quality is very professional—both the audio and the visuals are crystal clear. I can't recommend this enough. (EL)
(Power it Up, Postfach 1114, 38156 Vechelde, GERMANY, www.power-it-up.de)

V/A – "Hate/Love" 2xCD

Wow! This, my friends, is one awesome compilation. 45 ruling Italian bands from the 80s—an incredibly exciting scene back in the day—on two discs in a DVD-sized case. The comp opens with a scorcher from I DENY and the quality continues on from there. I don't know why WRETCHED, CCM, and PUTRID FEVER didn't make it on here, but all the other greats are represented, like thrash masters RAW POWER, INDIGESTI, PEGGIO PUNKS (yay!), and NEGAZIONE. Yes, wild, lo-fi thrash abounds on this comp, but there are some other goodies, like the underrated 7 SECONDS-influenced HIGH CIRCLE, STIGMATHE (catchy street punk), and RIDE (fast rockin' punk with keyboards). The winners in my opinion are THE WOPS with their BIG BOYS-sounding classic, "Hateful Town" (someone should release more of this band's stuff!), and a killer circle-pit-inducing track from CHAIN REACTION. (But STINKY RATS win for the best band name!) If that's not enough, this comes with a glossy black-and-white booklet insert with lyrics, excellent photos, and liner notes (in Italian). The layout and quality remind me of the fantastic old Italian fanzine *T.V.O.R.* (which I just found out will be reissued by this same label sometime this year). All the songs on here are from demos and hard-to-find records. Even *this* record is hard to find, so grab it if you see it. Available as a double LP as well. (PC)
(Lovehate80.it, www.lovehate80.it)

V/A – "Loud and Disobedient" CD

This is a great international compilation that includes the follow bands: NEUROOTTISET PELIMANNIT (Finland), LETHAL OD (UK), LOS REZIOS (Peru), ZED (Portugal), APPARATUS (Malaysia), JACK TORRANCE (Spain), SICK TERROR (Brazil), and ANFO (Peru). There are a variety of styles represented here from the old school sounding Finnish attack of NEUROOTTISET PELIMANNIT to the blast beat grind of SICK TERROR. There were really no stinkers here making this is one of the better comps I have heard in a while. (RC)
(Disobedience, disobediencerecords@reallyfast.info)



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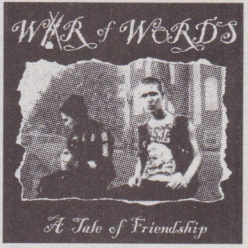

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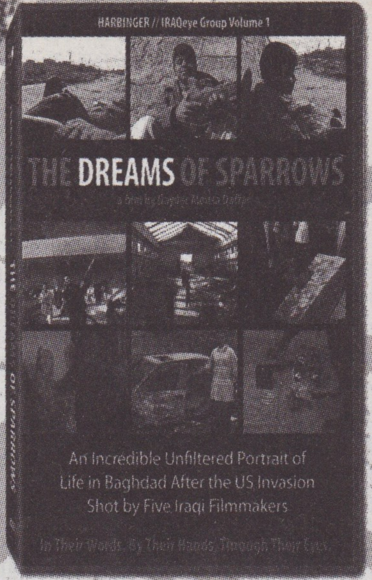
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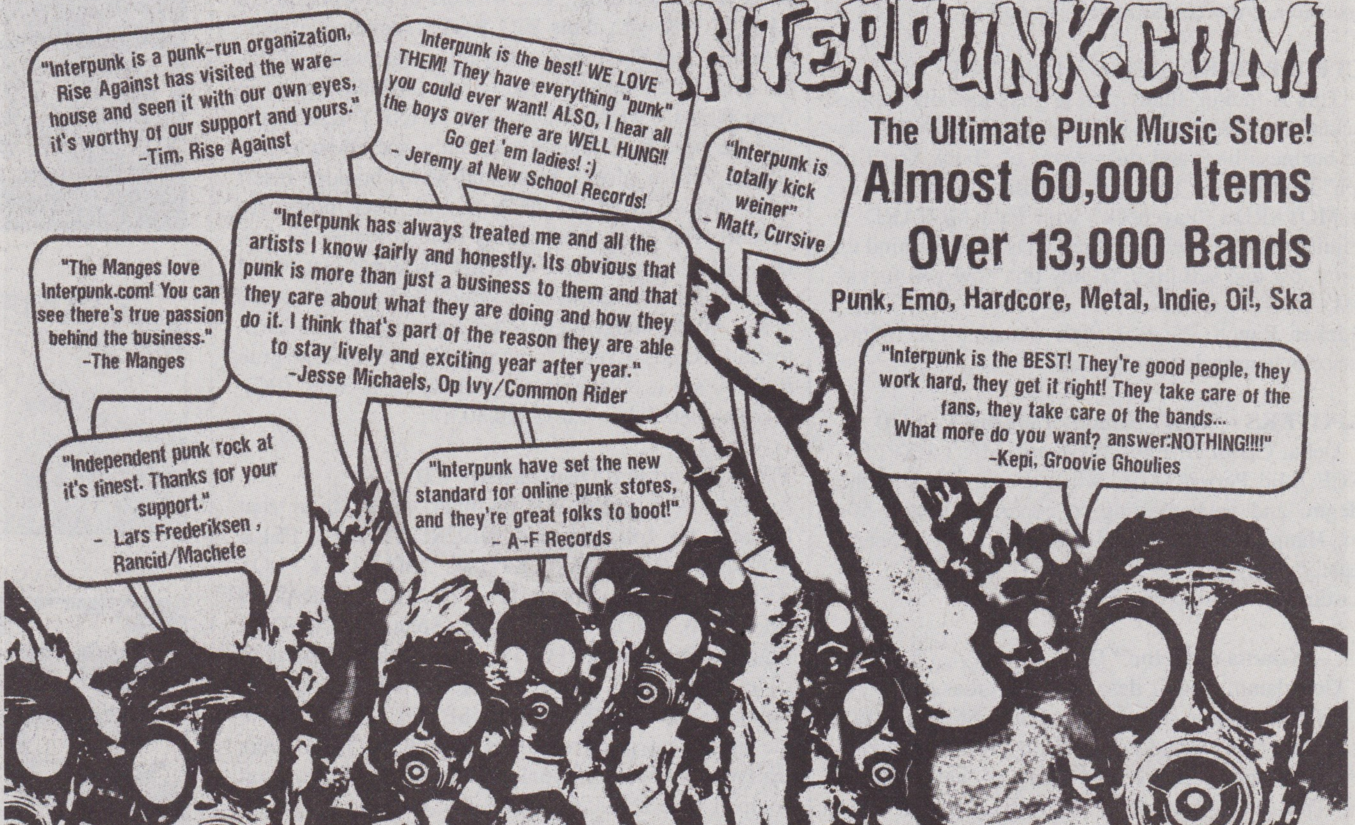
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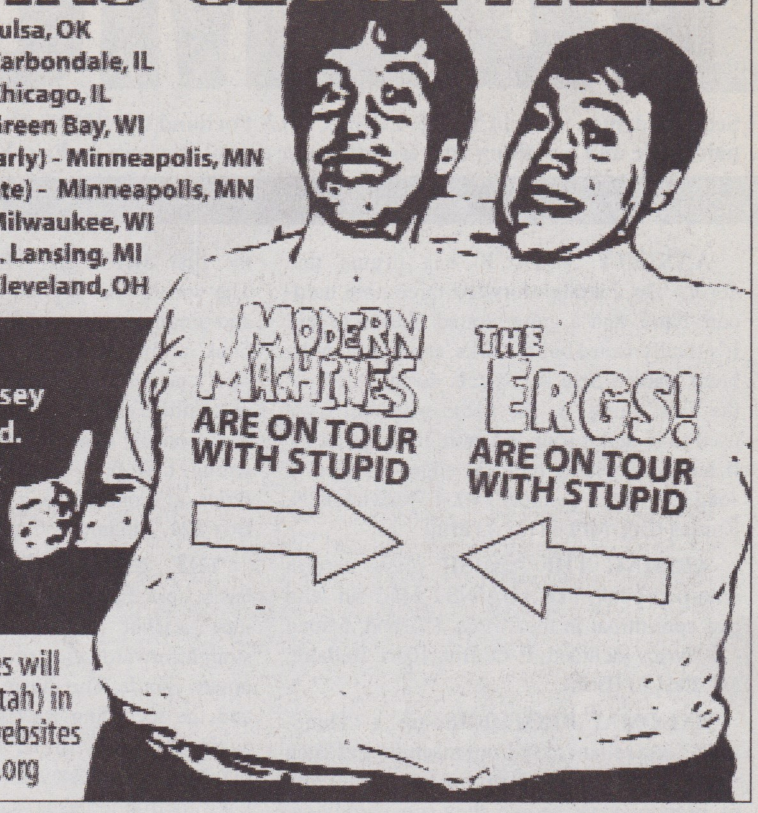
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DEMOS

Send all demos to: Erin Yanke, PO Box 1113, Portland,OR 97207. Please provide a postage paid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Erin Yanke & Peter Avery.

ANXIETY ATTACK has drums and vocals like a straightforward three-note hardcore band, and a guitar sound like an organ! It's totally weird but it works, especially in the break parts where the vocals do the "address the kids" thing. As the demo went on, I got used to it, and it sounded more like regular lo-fi hardcore with a melodic edge. ($2 ppd. 7 song CD, lyrics included. 4004 Warwick #2N, Kansas City, MO 64111.) (Erin)

ARMING THE AMISH plays earnest emo-pop punk, like AGAINST ME! but with less sore throat in the vocals. ($1 ppd. 5 song CD, lyrics included. P. O. Box 1016, Bellaire, MI 49615.) (Erin)

BALOMAI BROTHERS are a "Hungarian" duo reliant on a drum machine and kitch to make their music. I am not sure what kind of pseudo-suave people they are parodying, and that makes the joke hard to get. However, they are truly enjoying what they do, and that's a good thing. Musically, they build on the drum machine with some seemingly out-of-place metal-type riffs and loud, crooning vocals. ($5 ppd. 19 song CD, no lyrics included. 5771 Doris Dr., Brook Park, OH 44142.) (Erin)

CAPITAL, in their glossy paper bio, say they are "here to give you a dose of shit." I would have been less straightforward, describing their mix as the worst of excessive 70s rock, and the weird 90s punk/funk mix. Be careful what you write about yourself, kids, or this might just happen to you. ($2 ppd. 3 song CD, no lyrics included. 254 Grove St. #1, Jersey City, NJ 07302.) (Erin)

DEAD IS DEAD plays slow, depths-of-hell, metallic, doomy punk. The vocals are sustained, anguished yells over traditional and new hard-rock riffs. Definitely brought about the chasm in my basement and the demons in the living room. Totally solid. (5 song CD, no lyrics included. 2224 Klein Rd., Wilmington, NC 28405.) (Erin)

FATAL RIOT sent two demos this month—yeehaw! They play classic, mid-tempo Southern California hardcore, and they do it well. They're like adding the tiniest bit of melody and taking out all the guitar solos on the first SUICIDAL TENDENCIES album. The vocalist has a good mix of yelling anger and singing style, and he sings about classic punk problems and concerns, for example: "Let's go get drunk/fuck religion." What a way to combine themes! There are some repeated songs on the demos, but really, you can't go wrong. ($8 ppd. each. One 10 song CD, no lyrics, and one 12 song CD with lyrics! P. O. Box 621, Alhambra, CA 91802.) (Erin)

THE FRONTIER BASTARDS play basic, up-tempo, three-chord punk rock from a much earlier time. The songs are fast and straightforward with snotty vocals and basic power chords. The music is played fairly well and the recording isn't bad (a bit thin), but again it's pretty basic stuff that has been played many times over. (8 song CD, no lyrics. www.thefrontierbastards.com) (Pete)

GOLDCRUSH rules. They play punk like a less spazzy TYRADES, You know, more straightforward in their energetic, catchy fury, and no new wave-ish elements. This is fast, tough, catchy lady-fronted, and totally great. The letter was also full of information about the fake drums on this recording, but I can't tell, and I'm sensitive to that sort of thing. They've got a real guy now, so things are all okay again, but even with fake drums, this rips. Totally. (4 song CD, no lyrics included. Kongsveien 16, 0193 Oslo, Norway.) (Erin)

GREETINGS FROM URBANIA plays a mix of discordant hardcore, circus music and South Asian folk music. To your normal guitar, bass and drums, they have added clarinet, violin and a couple of horns. The vocals are sung off-key, which actually works well with the music. The recording itself is rather poor and the whole thing sounds like a mess at times, but at least it is something different and interesting. (8 song cassette, with lyrics. PO Box 13392, Philadelphia, PA 19101) (Pete)

HELL OR HIGHWATER is a fast-paced, melodic hardcore band in the vein of GOOD RIDDANCE. They have a CD of tight, fast and fairly catchy songs. For the most part the songs are poppy with sung vocals, heavy on the melodies, and some rather fine wanking that most of bands of this style don't have. They also have something that most "melodic hardcore" bands don't have: elements of hardcore in the music. The vocalist does scream sometimes and the music does get a bit heavy. The recording is a bit flat, but altogether it is pretty well-done. (7 song CD, with lyrics. Theband@hellorhighwatermusic.com) (Pete)

HOPE YOU CHOKE plays aggressive, pissed off, hardcore songs. The songs are pretty straightforward with quick blasts that go into your typical mosh/breakdown part. There is a good guitar mix, with one really chunky guitar sound and the other doing wanky high stuff. The vocalist has a semi-deep voice and screams himself out at all times. Nothing new but it's still fun to listen to. (4 song CD, with lyrics. hopeyouchoke_hc@yahoo.com) (Pete)

IRRITATORS are really good, balancing perfectly between catchy and tough, fast and danceable, guitar-driven without dominating the mix, and with clean recording and gruff vocals. Wow! (9 song CD, lyrics included. P. O. Box 173, Granville, MA 01034.)

THE LEFTOVERS sound like a mid-80s punk band that's teetering on the edge of crossing over to the metal. The riffs and guitar presence are spot on for the budding metal heads, and the energy and fuck you attitude is pure punk rock. More mosh parts than thrash parts, guitars need to be louder, but the singing is real singing, although the vocals are kind of hard to hear. (4 song CD, some lyrics. 100 N. Frontage, Danielson, CT 06239.) (Erin)

LYNCHED does folk songs with politically charged lyrics. They play acoustic guitars and flute with two vocalists. The two vocalists work well together, one with a harsh voice, while the other has a cleaner singing voice. The best song on the CD, "Woman on the Train," doesn't have either singer, though. It is a fairly simple, sweet song with guitar, xylophone and distorted talking. Musically, I wouldn't say there is much that is punk about this but lyrically they come through. (11 song CD, with lyrics. lynched4life@yahoo.co.uk) (Pete)

MATCHES & HEROIN plays emo hardcore songs that sound somewhat like CURRENT with a slightly more technical edge.

The lengthy songs move from slow parts with clean, picked out guitars and sung vocals, to heavy hardcore sections. The music tends to be a bit sloppy, especially in the drumming which really hurts a band that is trying to play anything technical. I also don't appreciate their dig at Voyager. (4 song CD, no lyrics. torpaul@verizon.net) (Pete)

MATERIA MEDICA tried to fuck with me by not exactly thanking god, but writing "to him be glory forever, amen." On their damn demo. I am not fooled. I don't review bands that thank god, or bands that don't give a physical address. Kids, don't let this happen to you. (Erin)

NETWORK OF TERROR plays grindcore that throws a bone to us punk rockers who aren't exactly into metal out here, mixing up speeds and styles and technical proficiency with blazing bludgeoning! The vocals are high-pitched yelling, full of agony, but I'm not sure if it's the giving or receiving of agony. Good! (14 song CD, lyrics included. 704 E. 1st St. Greenville, NC 27858.) (Erin)

PARALLAX busts out six solid hardcore tunes (two of them being SIDE BY SIDE covers). The songs are up-tempo with your typical breakdowns. The guitars mix up solid power chords with catchy leads. The vocalist really belts it out, and the drumming is complicated but still right on. Altogether the music is well played and well recorded, with enough changes to keep it interesting. (6 song CD, with lyrics. PO Box 970085, Orem, Utah 84097, www.goldenspikemusic.com) (Pete)

RISKY BUSINESS plays mostly slow, grinding, hardcore with some quick blasts of speed thrown in. I guess the sound is somewhere between though guy, New York hardcore and POISON IDEA. The guitars play chunky power chords, the vocalist chants a lot and the drums play a solid mid-tempo rhythm. Altogether, basic but solid punk. (5 song cassette, with lyrics. 959 Richie Dr., Halifax, NS B3H3P4, Canada, www.setfirestudios.com/rb) (Pete)

So, then you have **RAPESEED**, with such tasteful lyrics at "die slut, die slut slut" and "death death death by AIDS." What the fuck? Really, *what the fuck*?

SENSITIVE ROCK TRIO is no more, and they are reborn as ARM THE AMISH, which probably sounds familiar because they're also reviewed this month. SRT is emo pop punk too, but plays fast, straightforward pop punk that gets emo in the time changes and vocals. Yeah, like FIFTEEN. ($3 ppd. 16 song CD, no lyrics included. P. O. Box 1016, Bellaire, MI 49615.) (Erin)

TRENDY BASTARD rants about drinking, mesh hats and skateboarding. They also throw out some metal-influenced grindcore songs that almost border on emo-violence. They play ultra fast songs with heavy breakdowns and guitars that move between a chunky mess and picked out leads. The main vocalist has a high-pitched scream, while the second singer gets a pretty good growl going. They songs are pretty catchy and have plenty of hooks to keep you interested. If you're going to call people out on being trendy you should watch out because Mexican wrestling masks and old-style bondage drawings are fairly trendy themselves. (4 song CD, with lyrics. trendybastard@hotmail.com) (Pete)

VILENTLY ILL comes at us again in the demo column—old friends, they are. Or, he is—remember, it's a one-man band that doesn't sound like a one-man band. Yeah! This is one cassette of the two previously released demos, and a bunch more bonus songs. Musically, this runs the gamut of punk rock, really catchy songs, and really thrashy songs, and every thing in between. They're mostly fast-paced, simplistic, guitar driven, and good! Glad to see you back. ($3. 54 song cassette, no lyrics included. 5726 Sussex Ct., Troy, MI 48098.) (Erin)

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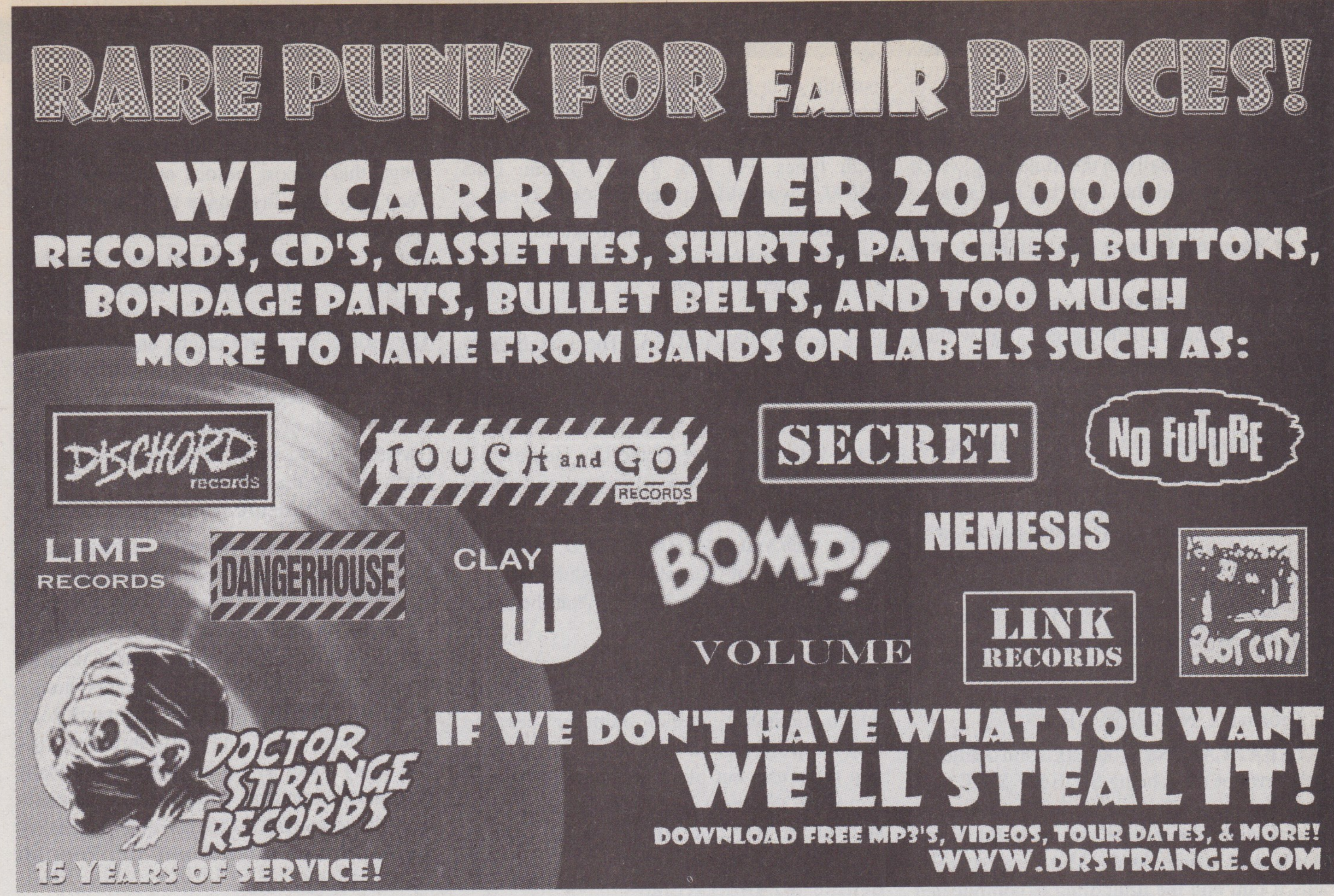
www.maximumrocknroll.com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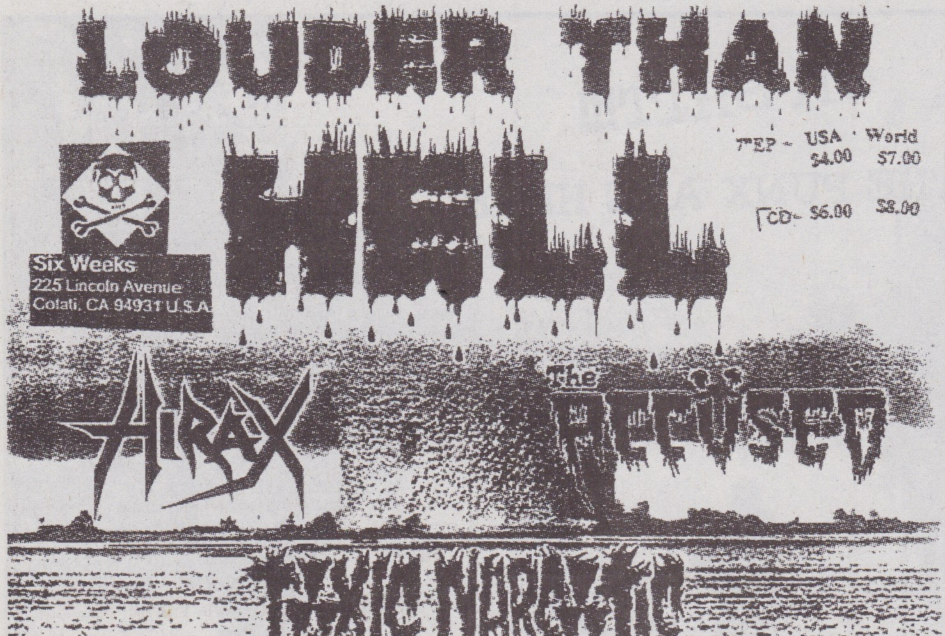
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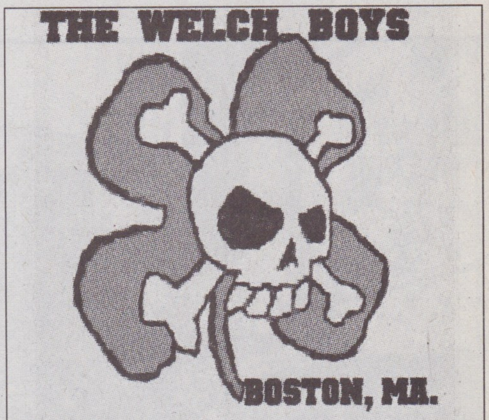
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ZINES

Reviews by: (AR) Aragorn, (JB) Julia Booz Ullrey, (PC) Paul Curran, (JD) Jip Daems, (MD) Mikel Delgado, (BD) Ben Ditch, (LG) Layla Gibbon, (CH) Cassie Harwood, (HH) Harald Hartmann, (JM) Jeff Mason, (GN) Golnar Nikpour, (CR) Casey Ress, (AS) Andy Shoup, (DS) Dionne Stevens.

Please send your zine in for review to MRR, PO Box 470760, San Francisco, CA 94147. Write down any information you want included in the review; method of printing, number of pages, issue number and postpaid price. If you want us to include a foreign postpaid price, tell us. If you accept trades, tell us. The only information we will include is what you provide us.

ABORT! #17 / $2, "prisoners and poor people pay what they can"
5.5 x 8 - copied - 44pgs

There are a lot of things to like about *Abort!* – it's a personal zine about a guy who lives in a squat, books shows, is evicted, etc. Meanwhile, he rides his bike around and does drugs and it all takes place in NYC. There's plenty of writing if you like his style, and also included are decent interviews with Hiretsukan and 1905. I mention the good parts for balance, 'cuz I disliked this issue. Thing is, I hate Brooklyn hipsters (thankfully I've never seen one, but I'm sure they're like the SF ones, only more hip, so worse), and Jonathan acknowledges both his middle class, white guy priveledge and his hipster-in-waiting status. He slums in the Bronx 'cuz it's fun and free (can't blame him there), but he's blasé about the inevitability of him taking his rightful place in the lofts of Williamsburg. It's good that he's up front about this stuff, but it's not the kind of thing that gets me stoked on a zine. (JM)

Jonathan Spies / 45 E 7th St. #106 / New York, NY 10003

ALTERNATIVE PRESS REVIEW Vol. 9 #1 / $5 US, $6 Canada
8.5 x 11 - printed - 68 pgs

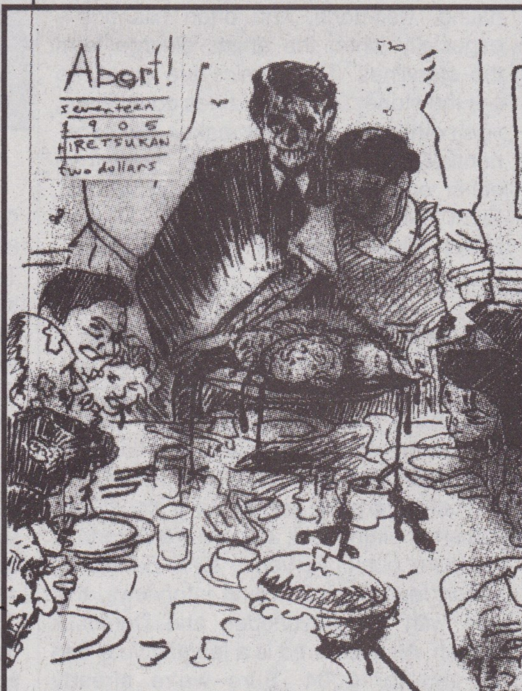
Cool political magazine with lengthy articles on the war in Iraq, Ward Churchill, Stencil Pirates, and other issues. Overall the articles were pretty well written. My favorite one was the article on stenciling. In my opinion the layout and the cover deserve some more attention to make this magazine more appealing, but nonetheless this was an interesting read.

AAL Press / PO Box 6245 / Arlington, VA 22206

ANTI-ART UNKNOWN #3 / $1
8.5 x 11 - copied - 22 pgs

This zine is a combination of writings and art. There is a piece on the Post-Left in here, a "how to" for DIY stenciling and a piece on Kandinsky and Bauhaus.

2010 Greystone Rd / Lebanon, PA 17042 / ramsburg@gmail.com



ASSASSIN AND THE WHINER #15 / $2
4.25 x 5.5 - copied - 36 pgs

It had been so long since I'd seen an issue of this zine, I'd almost forgotten about it. I always enjoyed Carrie's graphic style, and her bittersweet stories of love, loneliness, and alcohol, with the occasional cat in there to keep crazy cat ladies like me happy. This issue continues in her same style of comics and stories, and is well worth picking up. Please note, this is the last issue ever. Carrie's future endeavors will be called *Danger for Deep Water*. (MD)

Carrie McN / PO Box 49403 / Los Angeles, CA 90049

BOXCUTTER # 8 / $1
4.5 x 5.5 – copied – 24 pgs

Like other issues of *Boxcutter*, which is based in the Bay Area, this issue revolves around a central theme. This time around, it's the concept of home, or maybe more accurately, being away from home. Also like other issues of *Boxcutter*, the quality of writing varies from contributor to contributor, who all work collectively to put the zine together. Altogether, I always find this zine to be a worthwhile read if a bit forgettable. That is to say, I always enjoy reading *Boxcutter* but rarely carry its stories with me for long. I have to admit that I laughed out loud when the section that started out by telling me that I "don't have to leave home to go on vacation" recommended that I "indulge in a mind-altering substance." Is that really advice that warrants being written down? (GN)

Tomas / 1636 Fairview St / Berkeley, CA 94703

CRACKS IN THE WALL / $1.00 or trade/mix tape
8.5x6 - copied - 48 pgs

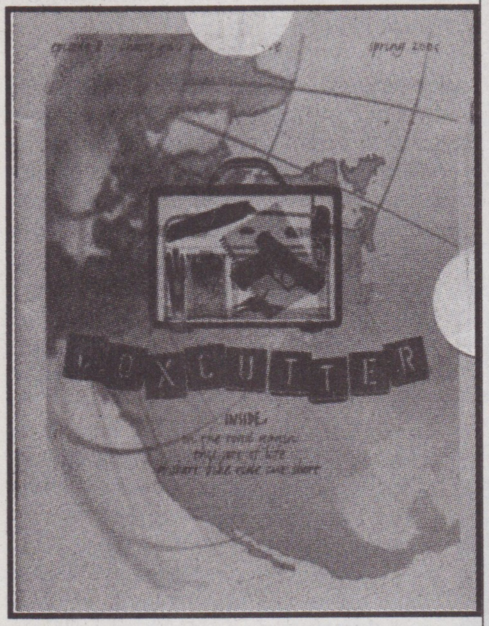
This kind of looks like one of those *Beginner's Guide to...* books, which maybe they only have in England? They are these goofy guides to anything from Marxism to Astrophysics done in comic book form...this would be the guide to Medium is the Message 60s style media commentary. It kind of reads like a paper by someone at a very expensive liberal arts college, except it's not so dry and academic, the writer's personality shines through, and yeah I know I overuse this word but it's goofiness is charming. Made for an entertaining BART ride, anyway. (LG)

Andy / CITW 2 / Tinkham Glenn / Wilbraham MA 010095

A CHILD'S GUIDE TO NIHILISM #1 / $1
8 x 7 – copied – 32 pgs

Too often I find myself struggling to explain

nihilism to young children. The 1800s movement centered on the need to destroy the old world before a new one can be established seems lost on four or five year old pups. Aragorn and his cohorts have given to us a clear and fun coloring activity book that also effectively illustrates the history and philosophy of nihilism. It's a great read on a subject that can be a little difficult to make interesting. Bringing a century's old movement to life and adding color and vibrancy is no easy task, but this zine successfully engages the reader in an interesting history lesson. (CR)
aragorn@riseup.net



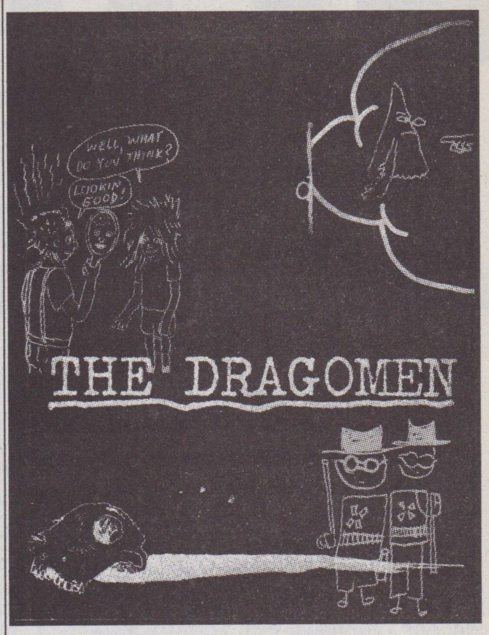
CHUMPIRE #179 / 1 stamp or trade
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 4 pgs
This dude's been really taking advantage of our "free copy of *MRR* to reviewed fanzines" policy. Issue #179 already? You'll catch up with us someday, li'l brudder. Anyway, I suppose you want another review, huh? Ok, if you don't know, Chumpire is always short and cheap (cheap as free!). This one's got the usual reviews (short, no frills—whatta ya want for nothin'?), short bits (middle school punks, Atlantic City road trip, buying a new stereo) and some show reviews. This is a good way to get rid of those Reagan stamps your grandma bought you. (PC)
GK / PO Box 27 / Annville, PA 17003-0027
chumpire@hotmail.com

DOLL #213,214 / $??
8 x 10.5 - printed - 130 pgs - Japanese
Well, since I cannot read either issue, I can tell you this much: lots of photos, ads, reviews and *tons* of interviews. 213 features: Dwarves, Profane Existence, Madball, the Mackshow, and a feature on Japanese Punk and New Wave from the 70s and 80s. Issue 214 has Seein' Red, Marky Ramone, Hard Skin, Dillinger Escape Plan, and 70s/80s punk/hardcore. (MD)
No 303 Aota Building / 3-1-9, Kita / Kohenji / Suginami-Ku / Tokyo / Japan

THE DRAGOMEN #1 / $4
8.5 x 11 / 4 x 6 - copied – 26 / 24 pgs
This is so fucking cool! A handful of creative folks were chosen to write one short story each. The pieces were then distributed among the same group—each person creating a one-to-four-page comic of the story they were assigned. The result is this rad zine with a neat screenprinted cover containing all the comics. As a bonus (in a neat little pocket in the back cover) you get a smaller zine of the stories in their original written form. The interpretations are fascinating, well-done, and often hilarious—especially when the artists diverge from the storylines. The comics are great, as are the stories, and both zines compliment each other in a way that makes this exponentially more entertaining to read than either one would have been on its own. Eight thumbs up! (PC)
Merry (Death) Stern / 4 Ringgold St. / Providence, RI 02930

EQUALIZING DISTORT Vol. 5 #1 / $2
8.5 x 11 – copied – 34 pgs
I thoroughly enjoy it every time a copy of *Equalizing Distort* turns up in my box for review. An offshoot of a Canadian hardcore punk radio show by the same name, this dedicated fanzine serves as a consistent and entertaining look at the current world of hardcore punk. Fervently DIY, *Equalizing Distort* features interesting interviews, this time with the Bayonettes and Domestik Doktrin. Also featured is a lengthy year end top ten for 2004. Sure we're already halfway into 2005, but it doesn't matter because everyone likes a good list right? Topped off with reviews and scene news, this is a handy read for fans of the current crop of excellent hardcore punk there is world over. Recommended. (GN)
equalizingXdistort@ciut.fm

FOLLOW UP #24 / free
8 - x 11 – newsprint – 44 pgs
If this magazine were in English there is no possible way that we would review it. It is a barely independent music magazine from Japan that shills for bands ranging from Balzac and Paint it Black to System of the Down. The magazine is well put together and looks nice like a custom paint job on the coffin of everything you ever found inspiring about music. (AR)
ShuwaSanbancho Bldg 7F / 28 Sanbancho, Chiyoda-ku / Tokyo 101-0063 / Japan



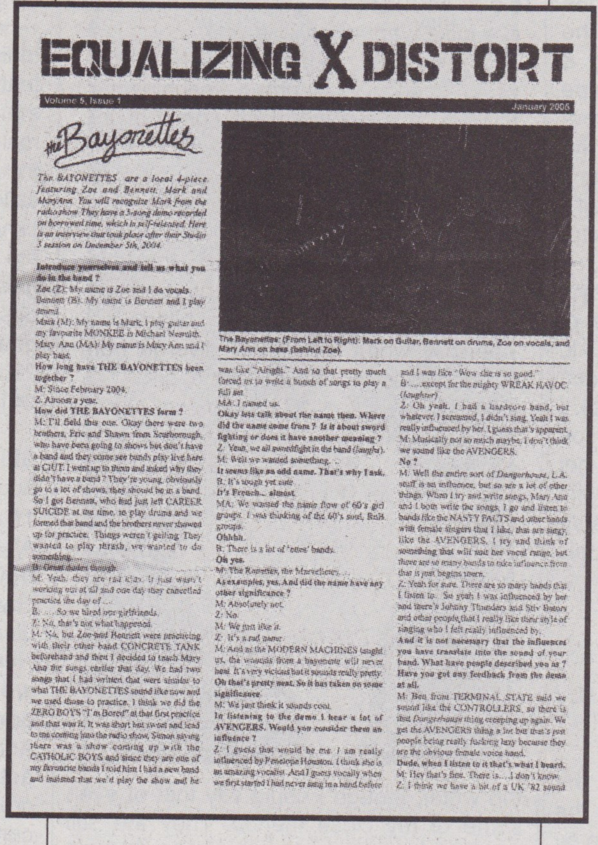
GO METRIC! #19 / $3
8.5 x 11 – printed – 84 pgs
The last time I picked up this mag I was impressed. There is some fine writing in this issue as well, such as the interview with the washed up ass Rick Neilsen of Cheap Trick, a seething eulogy of Elliot Smith that poses the question, can one be a legend without dying too early (think about it), a Bananas interview (so long coming), an interview with two parts of the Catholic Boys, and some other hilarious shit. Maddy from Tight Pants does a battle of the bands between MTX and Minor Threat (not to be missed) and there are the truly delightful editorials from Mike Faloon, a gifted eccentric if I ever saw one. (JB)
Go Metric / 801 Eagles Ridge Road / Brewster, NY 10509

GRIOT #3 / free with return postage
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 28 pages
This sort of slice-of-life zine novella, which was not invented by but certainly taken to stellar levels by *Cometbus* and its ilk is an awesome type of work. It is conceivable that this style of zine, in the right hands could remain fresh almost forever. Just as it is important to have influences and people you can look up to, however, it is important to try and stand on your own. *Griot* mentions *Cometbus* in the *very first sentence*. Stylistically, everything this guy writes about is like *Cometbus*. right down to the guy talking about drawing out a map of

Columbus, Ohio with all of his favorite punk attractions and sights. I'm really surprised he didn't hand-write this zine in capital letters. (AS)
90 E 4th Ave / Columbus, OH / 43201

HEARTCHECK #1 / $7
5 x 8 - printed - 36 pgs
This is a collection of writings by West Coast anarchist's best known prisoners Jeffrey "Free" Luers and Rob "Los Ricos" Thaxton. The high cover price is due to the fact that this publication primarily exists as a fundraiser for Free's appeal. The message of the publication aspires to be motivational and to "inspire people... get them thinking outside the box of activism." This message is largely muddied by statements like "I would...stand with any union locked out or march with women fighting for reproductive rights. I do not see the dividing line between the various struggles." There are some themes through the publication that are pretty clear. There are allegedly some insurrectionary anarchist zine producers who need to stop being comfortable and do...something. There is a non-debate that needs to be referred to again-and-again about violence vs. non-violence. There is a general lack of, is it authenticity or possibly righteousness, in the modern radical milieu that needs to be named, lamented, and shamed. Rob and Jeffrey threw a rock and lit a match respectively. They are suffering greatly for their actions and I respect them for their public commitment while they are still imprisoned. This does not mean that they are particularly gifted revolutionary strategists. But in these times I'll take what I can get. (AR)
Free's Defense Fund / PO Box 3 / Eugene OR 97440

HIGH HEELS SLUT #8 / $3 or 3
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 60 pgs
A true *fan*zine containing half reviews and half short interviews with bands that all fit into the garage/punk/rock 'n' roll category. It's very legible and the photos look good. I enjoy a lot of the bands covered in here—The Accidents, The Spits, The Hatepinks—but didn't find anything in here that excited me too much. But if you're not turned off by the cover drawing of a naked woman furiously dildoing herself, and you're crazy about bands like The Manikins, The Drips, The Leghounds (there's even an Alice Donut interview in here), then this may be your kind of thing. The one funny bit in here is an interview with Belgium's own King Koen, who bears an uncanny resemblance to Marky Ramone (there's a picture of the two of them together with the caption: "Who's who?"), and his story of his band covering a song that they thought went "Hot dogs in space!" Turns out it was Richard Hell and the Voidoids singing "Love comes in spurts." D'oh! (PC)
Retard Wim / Oude Tramweg 50 / 8560 Moorsele / Belgium


EQUALIZING X DISTORT
Volume 5, Issue 1
January 2005
The Bayonettes
The Bayonettes: (From Left to Right): Mark on Guitar, Bennett on drums, Zoe on vocals, and Mary Ann on bass (behind Zoe).

IMPACT PRESS #56 / $3
8 - x 11 - newsprint - 64 pgs
I have reviewed this quite a few times and generally am not complementary. Largely this has been because of the general incoherence of the publication (which is to say it has come off with a general vibe of "why is this being published?") and tragically liberal politics. While the second problem is still in full effect this is, by far, the best issue of *Impact Press* I have ever seen. It is not dominated by tacky advertising, there are actually a couple of good articles (the stand outs are the defense of Churchill and the story on religion and education), and the layout isn't offensive. *Impact Press* seems to have found itself a niche of bridging independent (mostly punk-lite) music and politics. In that space it has finally found coherence. (AR)
PMB 361 / 10151 University Blvd / Orlando, FL 32817

KISS MACHINE #10 / $5
7 x 8.5 – printed – 84 pgs
This is the second month in a row that I've reviewed a zine that is funded by the Canada Council for the Arts, so I guess we can add to the list of Cool Shit that the Government does in Canada. It's gotta be rough these days being a punk in Canada. I mean it's a punks birthright to hate the government, but when gay marriage is legalized, pot is decriminalized, and the government is giving money to people to make zines, then what? That being said, the said Arts Council-sponsored zines are really more magazine than zine, and unfortunately, a bit dull. *Kiss Machine* has a bit of the existential malaise that characterizes *Stay Free* magazine, but is less graphic oriented and comes off a little self-obsessed and half-assed. Items of note: *Kiss Machine* #10 is entitled "the Disposable Issue" and above the "Editor's Note" intro section, there are two drawings of poop in a toilet. (AS)
PO Box 108 / Station P / Toronto, ON / M5S 258 / Canada

LUGUBRIOUS #1 / free
8.5 x 11 – printed – 1 pgs
This is not a zine, yet. It's one side of one page with two pieces of writing. One is an introduction to the zine and the other a review of a show. This might, however, be the only zine I've ever seen from Mississippi. It can't be easy and I have to give the credit that he deserves in trying to start something like this. Future issues will hopefully be longer, with a better selection of writing, but everything has to start somewhere. (CR)
Lugubrious / 644 Highland Park / Tupelo, MS 38801

NEGATIVE REACTION #2/ $3 surface, $5 air
8.5 x 11 – copied – 35 pgs
I got pretty excited to see the second issue of this mostly streetpunk/Oi zine out of England in my box. I'm not involved in that scene or anything though the language applied here makes me giddy, regardless of content. In this case, though, I approve of the content as well. Well never mind the derailed skinhead fantasy, the point is *Negative Reaction* is well compiled. Interviews this time around include Emergency (from Canada), Razor Bois from Russia, as well as Hard Skin, Argy Bargy, and the Itchy Tits. Plus, there's some useful tips for attracting the birdies. It's peppered with enough politics, jabs, and a bounty of reviews to keep the spice

level up. Yeah, I said peppered. (DS)
Trev Howarth / 20 Front St. Tanfield Lea / Stanley Co. / Durham DH9LY / England
trevhagl@hotmail.com

THE NEUS SUBJEX #64 / $1
3.5 x 8.5 – copied – 20 pgs

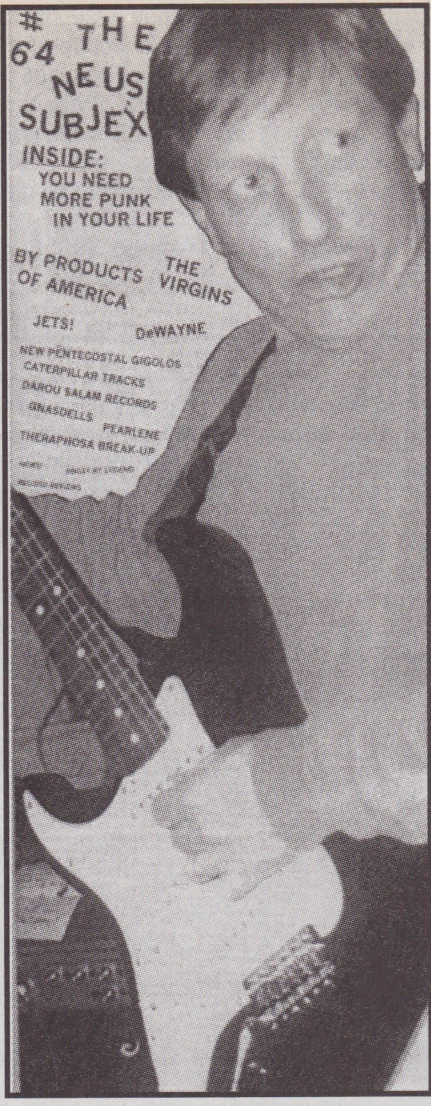
This little zine has been around for a whopping sixty-four issues, though I must admit that I am a newcomer to its fold. I actually got a throbbing headache and a weird tic in my left eye from how incredibly small the font is in this irregularly shaped issue. The font in *The Neus Subjex* makes *Slug & Lettuce* look like it is one of those big type books for the visually impaired. Nonetheless, I made my way through the whole of the issue, which—since reading it fuckin' hurt to read—must mean that it's good. The best part by far is the introductory section by the zine editor. Irreverent, off the cuff, and disjointed in a charming way, I laughed out loud more than a couple of times at Shawn's musings about life, punk, slang, Miller High Life, and the "correct" amount of jet fuel in a woman's breasts. I could've done without the weird question and answer section about whether or not mainstream punk has anything to do with real punk—it just made the jaded respondants sound out of touch. Nonetheless, this was a fun read all around. (GN)
PO Box 18051 / Fairfield, OH 45018
theneussubjex@aol.com

OVERWORKED AND STILL BROKE #2 / $3
8.5 x 6 - copied - 44 pgs

This kid put the Crimethinc logo on the cover just to fuck with people "I put the Crimethinc logo on the cover of this zine so that people would buy it. I am not part of Crimethinc and I want nothing to do with them. If you bought this zine for that logo, I hope you enjoyed it anyways. If not then that's your problem not mine." Hmm. I mean I could care less about Crimethinc but that seems kind of strange and passive aggressive. Basically this is a rant about his various construction jobs and the characters that he has come across whilst working. It reads like a conversation someone would have on a break at a shitty job. It seems like he has read a lot of Bukowski. (LG)
483 Lebanon Rd / Franklin CT 06254

PUNK LIFE #1.5 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 36 pgs

The first issue of *Punk Life* did not impress me much, and unfortunately, I feel the same way about this first and a halfeth issue. I don't listen to the same bands as the writer, though I could say that of even some of my close friends. They are still good people (my friends with different taste), so this is by no means an attack on the author. I just don't jive with the material; the style is flat. There are gobs of reviews and stuff on bands like Death to Tyrants, and an interview with The Mass. Some old show flyers act as partial redemption. Whatever, I'm sure the dude had fun in his day. (DS)
Don Irwin / 118 Roble Rd. #205 / Walnut Creek, CA 94597



THE RETURN OF MONKEYS IN THE SUN #2 / $4
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 50 pgs

Layers of goofy adoration for the John Waters, the Frida Kahlo, the 80s teen flix, the Guitar Wolf, and the Mexico City. This kid hails from the UK and writes solidly about what drives her wild. That flair comes with a fairly dense package of seemingly indulgent (not the bad kind) self-interest that defines the ramblings of personal zinery we all know and love. (JB)
Emma / 34 Sydney Street / Brighton. BN1 4 EP. UK

SIX RIPPED UP PICTURES FROM 1990 / $3?
4.5 x 3 - copied - 50 pgs

This is such an awesome zine. I like it when you read something and it seems more like a crazy 3am conversation than another corny "per-zine." Kat is such a great writer — when I was a teenager I always wanted to find a book that was written by a woman that could match the fever and excitement that I got from reading all those classic male anti hero myth makers, the closest thing was this book by Katherine Dunne called *Truck*, about a teenage girl runaway, I know this is kind of a long shot but this hits me in the same way. About fierce young girls finding themselves and each other in a desolate world. Adventure and friendship and fear and so on. (LG)
225 San Jose Ave / San Francisco CA 94110

SLINGSHOT #86 / $1, "free to prisoners and low income"
11 x 17 - printed - 16 pgs

Always worth a look, this issue of this East Bay standard is particularly good. The cover stories about the right's successes in dismantling public education and the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) epidemic are worth a dollar by themselves. Other great shit includes: the Wingnut Lifetime Acheivement Award, keeping one's activism sustainable, a rather difficult crossword, fighting military recruiting, a comic about crossing the Mexican-US border called in the Spanish language pages, resistance in Oaxaca, Mexico, femicide in Guatemala...Great job here. (JM)
c/o Long Haul / 3124 Shattuck Ave / Berkeley, CA 94705

STRAP YOURSELF IN #6 & #7 / $2
8.5 x 7 – copied – 16 pgs

I have been waiting for this zine to drop into my vacant oven mitts but I didn't know I was waiting until I felt the blessing of experiencing it. Crude yet poignantly funny comic renditions of extremely serious critiques of mass culture in the south dare you to feel uncomfortable, triumphant, inspired, chilled, and fucking juiced. Short but massive in scope, this zine attacks and affirms simultaneously. Issue #7 comes with a map of the abortion laws in every state, complete with the same kind of unnamed ambiguously autobiographically based characters having conversations with

Christians, yuppie heterosexist scum, and the brain dead. If you have an unsympathetic cynicism waiting to be contorted, I prescribe you this zine, or if you care about being angry while also being challenged. Yes. (JB)

S. Dorsett / 918 E. Gonzales / Pensacola, FL 32501

TEENAGE DEATH SONGS #16 / $?

7 x 8.5 – copied – 54 pgs

This perzine by Tennessee Jones took me for an emotional ride that I could literally map with a wavy line that dips and climbs, like one might see on a business chart. At times I felt nausea and irritation and then I would be like, yea, I feel your frustration man. Then *whoosh* brought back down to earth, restored by an honest and inspired realization. The author is a transgender punk with a largely religious (read: Christian) background that I was not as interested in examining than some other reader might be. I understand that his personal history has had a vital role in defining just who he has become, but nearly any mention of Christian "practice" or "tradition" makes the blood curdle inside my bones. I just don't believe it, and do not romanticize the church in any way, so I care not to read about these things… just me being truthful here. This issue is comprised of tales of self-destruction followed by a continued rebuilding process that many of the folks I run with—myself included—can empathize with. His style, while a bit flowery at times, is then punctuated with simple, well-phrased statements that remind his reader of this simple fact: life sucks, but it's beautiful. Hence, it is repeated throughout. Life sucks, but it's beautiful. Also included is an excerpt from Tennessee's book *Deliver Me From Nowhere. (DS)*

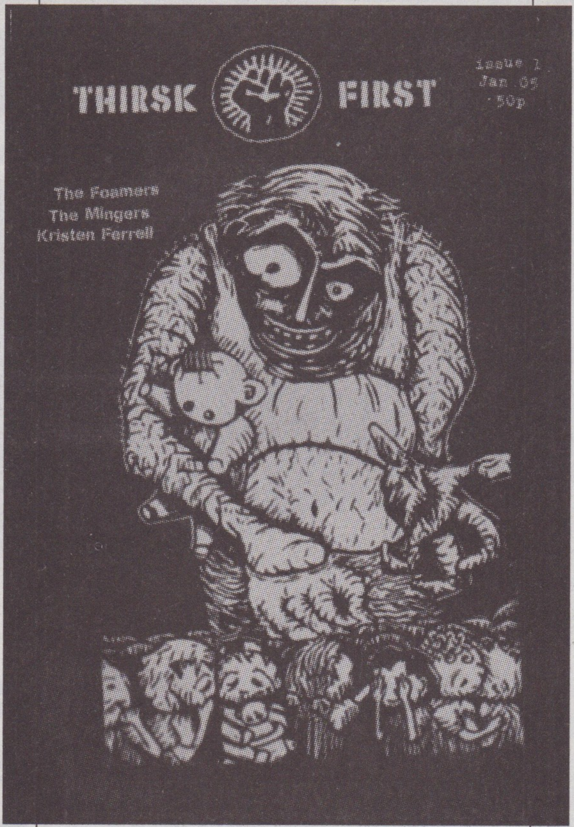
Tennessee Jones / 1090 Greene Avenue / Brooklyn, NY 11221

THIRSK FIRST #1 / 50p

5.25 x 7.75 – copied – 40 pgs

Overall, this UK-focused music zine is pretty sweet. It has columns, reviews, interviews, and no ads. Interviewed are artist Kristen Ferrell, The Mingers, and the Foamers. The first two are pretty good. Reviewed are a bunch of bands I wasn't familiar with, which I always like when they're punk bands, which these seem to be. The columns range in quality. Pete Don't Care reports that in PDX, Oregon, "there's loads of young punk pussy [lusting] after anything resembling a punk pin-up," which in his mind explains all the UK bands wanting to tour there. This type of attitude gives not caring a bad name, bro. There's wrestling shit too. (JM)

PO Box 132 / Thirsk / North Yorks / Y07 1WR / United Kingdom



TOINEN VAIHTOEHTO #184 / trade

8 x 6 - printed - 36 pgs - Finnish

This issue has interviews with Mistress Jennifer from the Nuns, Kolokol, and Disco Ensemble. There are also plenty of record reviews, and ads. You can also check out the fanzine on the net that includes a page in English. Just remember folks, Finland rocks! (HH)

PO Box 1 / 65200 Vaasa / Finland
www.punkinfinland.net/english

TOINEN VAIHTOEHTO #185 / trade

8 x 6 - printed - 36 pgs - Finnish

This fanzine comes out monthly, so it is easy to stay in touch with the punk scene in Finland. This issue features interviews with the bands Trash Brigade and Dive. There are also the usual record reviews and plenty ads. Overall this fanzine is a fun read. (HH)

PO Box 1 / 65200 Vaasa / Finland
www.punkinfinland.net/english

TONES & NOTES #3 / $1 or trade

8.5 x 6 - copied - 20 pgs

One of the coolest things about zines is that you can basically write on whatever subject you want. This zine is completely about creating music, or, as the makers describe it themselves: "Tones & Notes discusses making your own music: composing, arranging, notating, playing, recording, etc." This wasn't really of my personal interest, but I'm really sure that there are people out there who would love a zine like this. If you want to know more about playing music and composing your own songs I suggest you pick this up.

PO Box 190-tn / Philomath, OR 97370

TRUST #110 / $4

11 x 8 - printed - 68 pgs - German

The usual punk rock from this cool German fanzine! This issue features interviews with World Downfall, Freecore, Trend, Kafkas and Zu. There is also an article on the best concert hall in the world the AJZ in Wermelskirchen. The fanzine is also loaded with lots of new record reviews and cool ads. There are some columns, an excellent gig listing, and some interesting columns. Overall this is a great fanzine to stay informed on what is happening in the world of punk rock. (HH)

Postfach 110762 / 28087 Bremen / Germany
www. trust-zine.de

VERBICIDE #13 / $3.95

8.5 x 11 – printed – 68 pgs

A somewhat slick music zine that straddles the line between punk and indie…I dunno, it's like the John Kerry of magazines. There are good interviews with Ian Mackeye, Tim Kerr, The Immortal Lee County Killers, and features on Venus magazine and REO, a graffiti artist. There is also some mediocre fiction and some poetry that reinforces my dislike of said medium. There are lots of lengthy record and book reviews and ads to round this out. No mailing address? Bleagh! (MD)

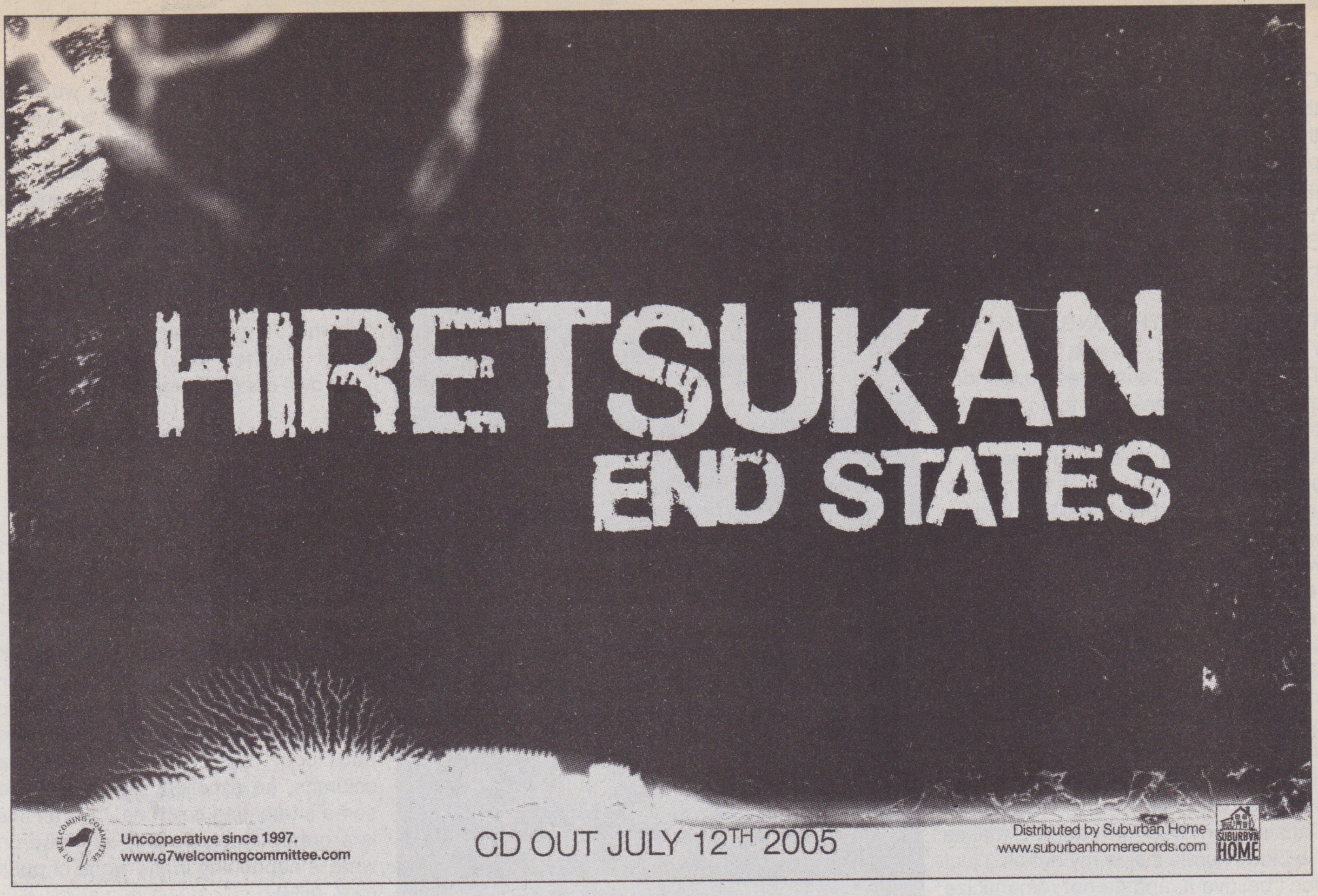
www.scissorpress.com

YOUTH CULTURE KILLED MY DOG #4 / $1

8.5 x 11 – copied – 54 pages

Youth Culture Killed My Dog comes out of Anderson, Indiana, and features interviews with the Hate Crimes, Synthetic Elements, the Malcontents, and Currently Held Captive. There are also comics. This is really sloppy stuff. It was either put together by a bunch of twelve-year-olds, or just looks like it. (AS)

310 W. Second St. / Anderson, IN / 46016



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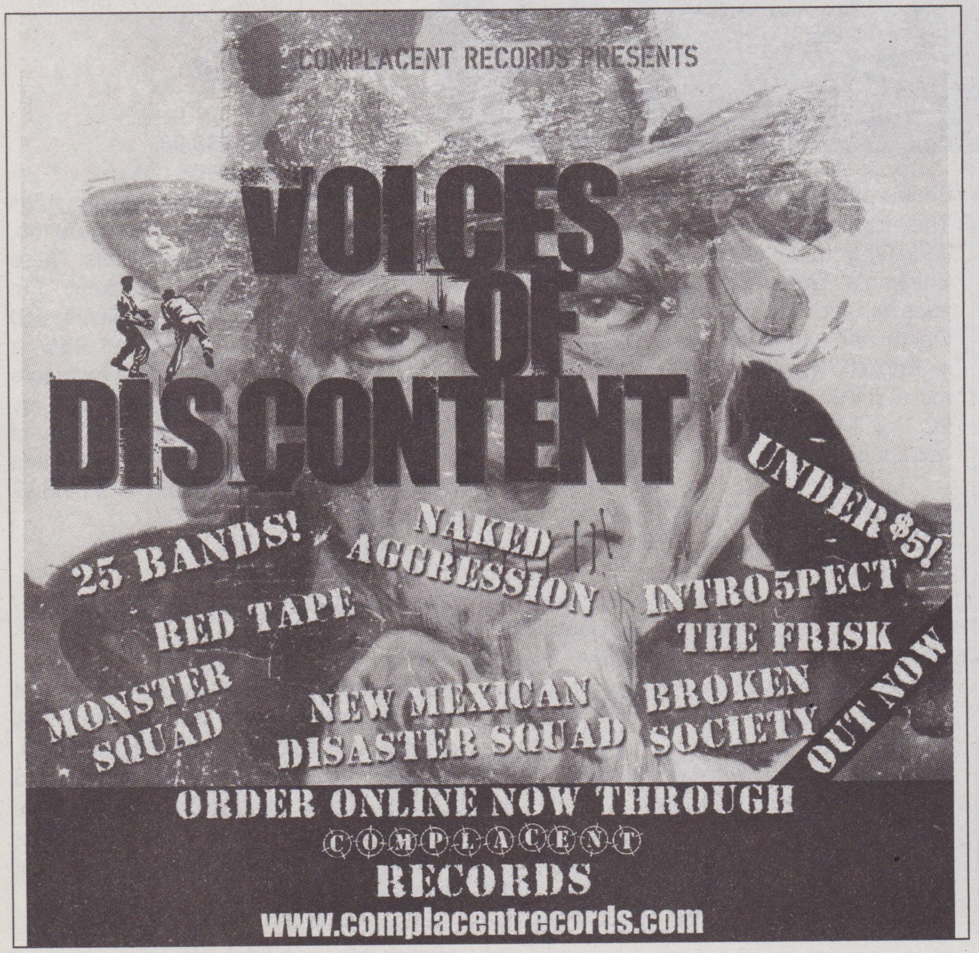

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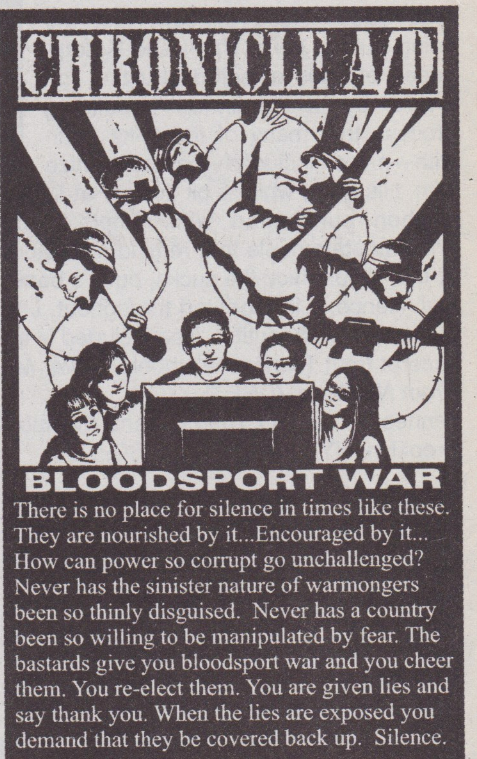

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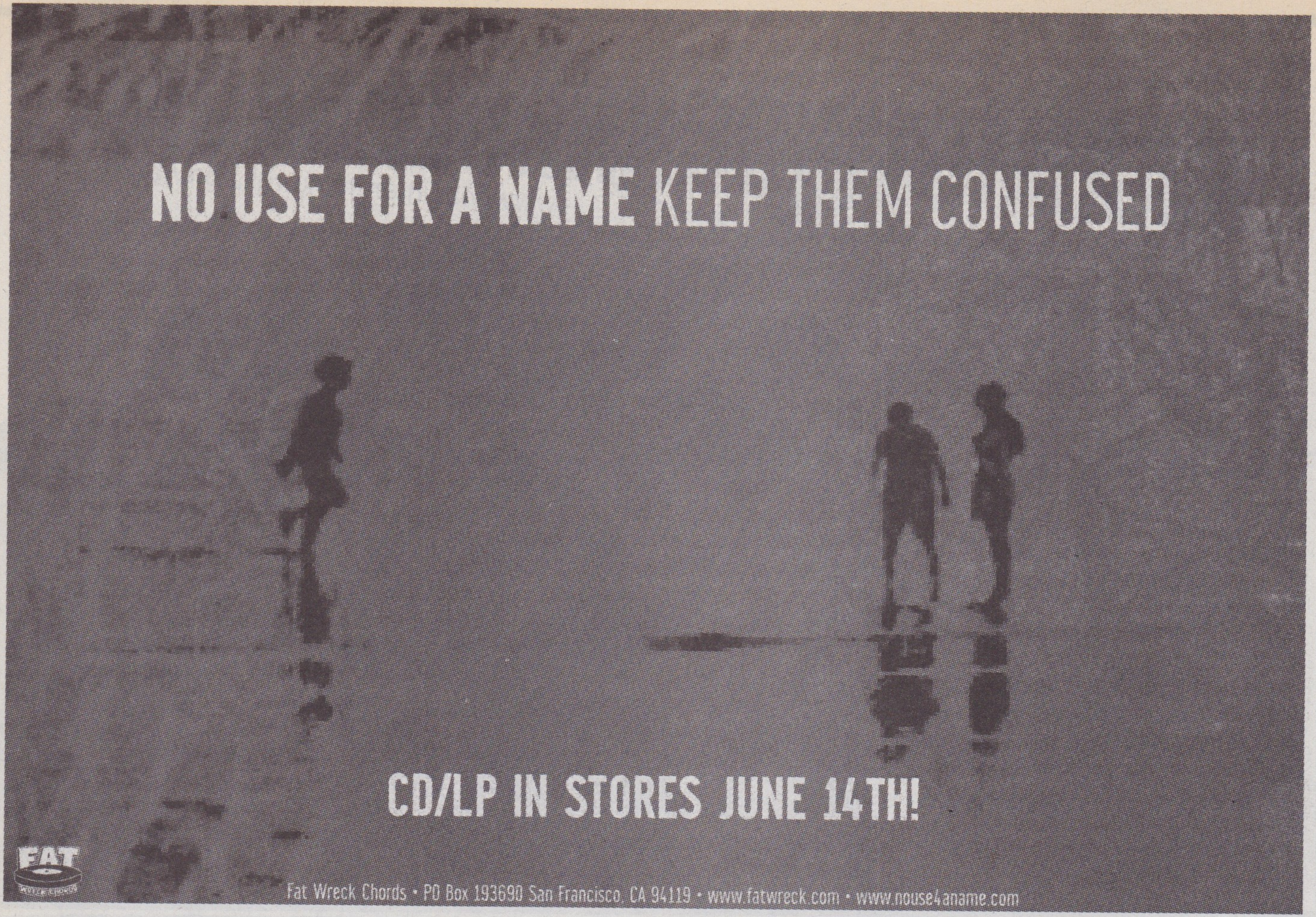
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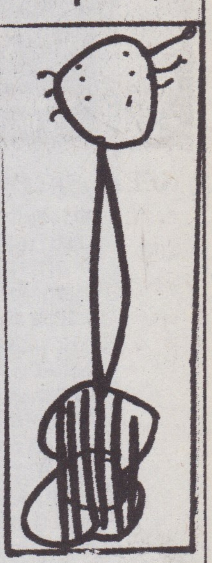

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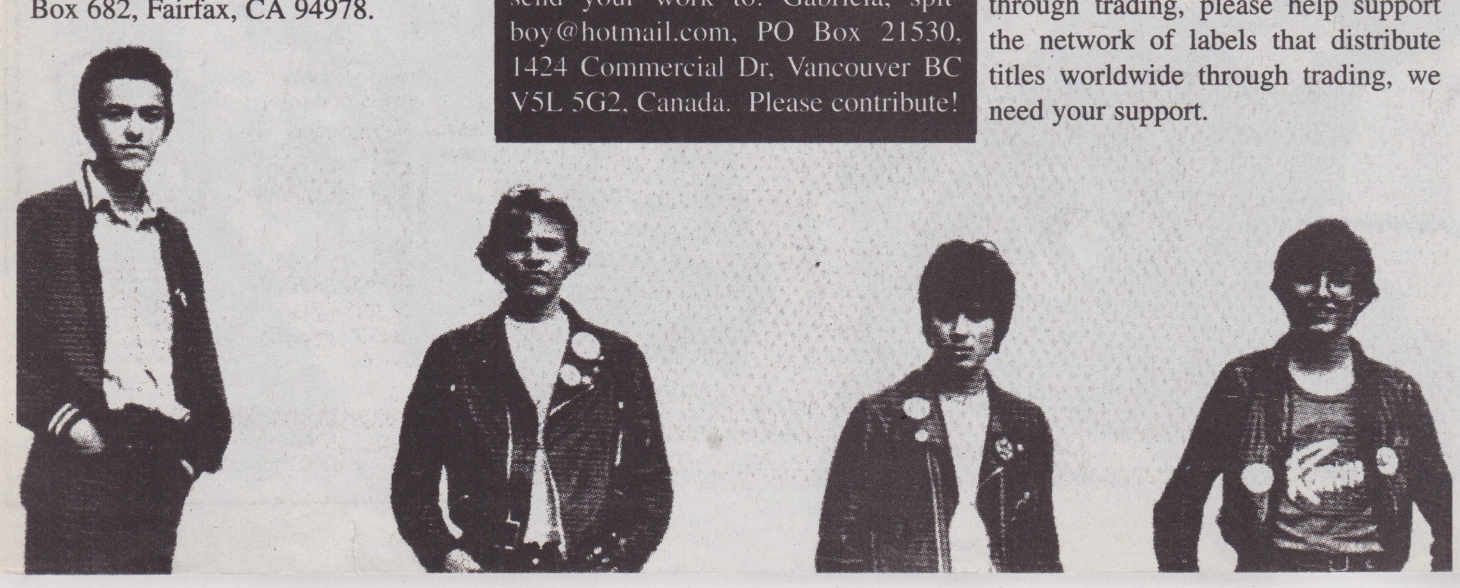

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